Tanong ng Bayan/A24
Handa ka bang magbayad ng dagdag sa bawis? Vote 2: "Oo" TEXT 2910
■ Across/A19
US naval might here for war games in Geneva
■ World/A10
Bomb threat forces US-bound plane to return to Sydney
■ News/A7
3 killed in fishing boat fire off Palawan
■ Metro/A24
Pasig rehires laid-off teachers
■ Lifestyle
Color of money: how it makes teen world go round

Oops, GMA goofed: P20B, not P100B, in gov't savings

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

HOPE government employees clued in love their jobs rather than reported increases Pres. Arroyo Macapagal-Arroyo is planning to abolish 50 agencies this year, or triple more than she declared in her State of the Nation Address (SONA) Monday.

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Ebdane may go to NSC to pave way for Aglipay

By Christine F. Esguerra

THE SHIFT swirling in the Arroyo Cabinet would most likely bring in the country's top cop.

Malacañang is eyeing Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. to replace Hermilio Gonzales as national

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website: www.inq7.net

GMA election strategy: Blending governance, magic, Noli

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo signs the Overseas Shipping Act and the PDIC Charter Amendments in Malacañang as Vice President Noli de Castro (left) and Senate President Franklin Drilon look on.

SPECIAL REPORT

By Tony Regalado

First of two parts

THE DAYS that followed Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's inauguration should have been days of euphoria in Malacañang. Instead, what swept the Palace halls was a contagious sense of crisis triggered by the urgent to Cesar Bautista saga.

But the sweet scent of a powerful election victory always hovered around. Her own Bayanihan Trio, 3-1 decision last week to challenge her new mandate before Comelec en banc has a new mandate.

After all, the presidential campaign for the May 10 election was a masterstroke of ingenuity—a covered ruthlessness. Mr. Arroyo's strategists said, they had to close the thin line between running you are not plan ensuring to ensure her a new mandate.

The campaign strategy as refined, unbridled access to government resources, the hiring of incumbent politicos, hundreds of opinion surveys, a deal with a populist TV personality and innovations to wired and treated com-

paign devices.

The strategy also involved turning human misery, such as the affliction of disaster victims, into political advantage and—most unabashedly—the setting up as a building in Pasig City of a machinery to feed that would go into operation once the order for the launch was given.

"It's the heart of the political machine," one member of Mr. Arroyo's campaign team said, referring to the redoubt, massively funded campaign strategy that reached deeply into the grassroots level.

The strategy had a wide range

(STORY, A2)

SC: Poe protest valid

Tribunal asks GMA to answer in 10 days

By Philip C. Tubeza and Bernardito R. Pleyto, PDI Correspondent

NOW, THE Supreme Court justices want answers.

Sitting as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET), the 14 justices, in a resolution yesterday, ordered President Macapagal-Arroyo to answer within 10 days accusations by actor Fernando Poe Jr. that she had cheated massively in the May 10 elections.

The tribunal issued the same directive to Vice President Noli de Castro following a similar protest filed by his defeated rival, former Sen. Loren Legarda.

"The court now wants answers, which [were] to say that the issues have been joined," [illegible] Jose Jr., chief of the high court's public information office, told reporters.

"You are aware that the protests are sufficient in form and substance, for which reason the [PET] is asking for answers and not for comments. The protests have been given due course," Mijares added.

Sufficiency in form and substance means Poe and Legarda had raised "enough valid grounds" for an election protest, he said.

Mijares said the tribunal would wait for the respondents' answers before deciding whether or not to start revalidating the votes in the more than 193,000 precincts across the country where Poe said irregularities had occurred.

"Acting on the election protest, ... filed by the counsel for Protestant Senator Mar Poe, the Tribunal resolved to require Protestee Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to file her answer within ten days from notice hereof," the PET said in its resolution.

Malacañang was unfazed.

"We are confident that we

GRACIA Burnham (center) shies sunflowers by displaying on the canvas upon her arrival from the United States on Monday night on board Continental Micronesia Flight CS-911. She was whisked away to an undisclosed facility by US Embassy representatives and agents of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Gracia to face questions never asked before

By Philip C. Tubeza, Leila B. Salaverria and Alcuin Papa

TOMORROW'S hearing on the five Police kidnapping victims could open up may not be enough time for former Abu Sayyaf Group hostage Gracia Burnham to give true testimony.

A junior department source said Burnham, who arrived in Manila on Monday night, would have to narrate all over again her harrowing ordeal in the hands of her abductors.

"She will be asked questions that [she] did not [have to] before," the source said.

Acting Justice Secretary Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez herself said Burnham might have to stay longer than the three days originally planned to finish her testimony.

According to the justice official, a set of guide questions was prepared by Burnham before she originally left for her journey from the United States—questions that dealt mostly with details to unfold in her book, "In the Presence of My Enemies," published in May 2003.

The source said the questions now need to help the star witness recall the incidents from the time she and her husband Martin, another American national, and 17 Filipino tourists were abducted from the Palawan resort on May 27, 2001, up till her rescue 377 days later. Martin

(STORY, A12)

MILITANT groups rally in front of the Australian Embassy in Makati City to protest their country's participation in the "coalition of the willing" that supported President Macapagal-Arroyo's decision to pull out Filipino troops from Iraq to save the life of truck driver Angelo de la Cruz.

Joker to Aussies: Too much, RP won't be buffer again

ACTIVISTS protesting hot and humid Australian flags in Makati City while Gov. Julian Nepomuceno Cardenas Jr. heads the return of the Philippines' newly mobilized 51-man force to save the life of truck driver Angelo de la Cruz.

Earlier Tuesday, the Australian government refused to apologize to the Philippines as well as Spain after a diplomatic row flared over Canberra's claims that Manila and Madrid had encouraged more hostage-taking in Iraq by caving in to terrorist demands for withdrawal of their troops from Iraq.

New Zealand also joined the United States, Australia and other countries in criticizing the Philippines, saying Burlington would soon have to reconsider its decision to save the life of any of its citizens kidnapped in Iraq.

Foreign Minister Phil Goff said that Burlington would do "everything possible to negotiate for the well-being" of a New Zealand national held hostage by terrorists, but that would not include bowing to their demands.

After the U.S. man Philippines contingent left Iraq a month ahead of schedule in compliance with the demand of Iraqi terrorists holding Angelo de la Cruz, they hired the truck driver who returned to a hero's welcome in the Philippines last week.

Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer described the spate of abductions in Iraq that followed De la Cruz's release and an unverified al-Qaida threat against Australia as the inevitable consequences of the Iraqi pullout by the Philippines and Spain.

Downer's statements prompted about two dozen activists from the militant Bayan ng Mangggagawa to rent and burn Australian

(STORY, A12)

Believe it or not: Metro air clean

By Volt Contreras

DIDN'T hold your breath for this piece of news.

Environment officials yesterday monitored that the air quality in Metro Manila and a few outlying areas was "within ac-

(STORY, A12)

A3
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 2004
WEATHER FORECAST
Second FRONTPAGE

Miriam still haunted by trauma

By Jerry E. Esplanada and Michael Lim Ubac

SEN. MIRIAM Defensor-Santiago said she was suffering from "post-traumatic stress disorder" as a result of the suicide of her younger son last year.

Her PTSD has "taken the form of exaggeration to speak my mind, to speak the truth regardless of the consequences even," the senator said in an interview.

The 22-year-old Alexander "Jef" Sakaro, described by his mother as the "most valuable element in my life," killed himself by overdosing on pills.

Santiago has decided to enter into talks with the ruling coalition under which she can act as guest candidate in the May elections and spend the next six years either term as an independent.

"I don't care anymore whether I serve with an administration or with an opposition. I serve only as People's Defender," she said.

"And I don't care what the Senate does to me. If I see things in a certain way I might be right or wrong because I am imperfect, but I will stand by it. I will not be threatened into accepting what might be a compromise," she said.

Malacañang has indicated it would not intervene in Santiago's decision to halt the administration coalition, which it regards as an internal congressional issue.

Palace still hopeful

But presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said the President hoped that Santiago would support her priority bills.

Bunye said Santiago had decided to distance herself from the Senate majority floor after she disagreed with the manner in which the Senate Oversight Committee on Energy led by Senator Juan Ponce Enrile conducted its investigation into the alleged overpricing of the Malampaya gas-to-power project.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. has agreed to share chairmanship of the Senate for the next three years. The arrangement, Drilon's opening of Congress today all the majority senators except Santiago voted Villar to another term as Senate President.

Santiago stood for Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. who became the Senate minority leader.

"The majority of House and Senate leadership is organized by the President as an internal matter to the two chambers of Congress. Nevertheless, I think everybody respects the decision of individual legislators on how they voted for the leadership," Bunye said.

According to Drilon sources, however, Santiago decided to cut her ties with the majority to protest against Drilon's alleged refusal to give her the chairmanship of the powerful Committee on Constitutional Amendments.

DEFENSOR

The 13-member administration bloc is now engaged in an overcrowding of Santiago who is not easily opposed.

Majority leader Francis Pangilinan and Senate Pro-tempore Loyalist Juan Flavier said Santiago would be invited to attend the majority caucus scheduled at lunchtime today.

A member of Santiago's staff said, however, that the senator was flying to Iloilo City at 7 a.m. today for a speaking engagement.

Psychiatrist's timetable

Santiago said she has been told by her psychiatrist that it would take at least two years to get over the trauma over her son's suicide.

She said her husband and son were also seeing the same psychiatrist whom she did not name.

"Because my son's suicide took place in my home, I was also the first to emotionally discover the body and that is a trauma," Santiago explained.

But it is why "we are ill, according to the psychiatrist, suffering from PTSD," she said.

Santiago said her PTSD took the form of "a very strong feeling of (over)exhaustion or fit."

"I have no patience to life. I have lost my sense of very strong purpose, one of my marked characteristics when I started in public office," she said.

"In other words, to put it bluntly I have nothing left to do," she said.

'No reason at all'

Asked why she went back to the Senate, she said: "I have no reason at all, except that my son died and I was suffering from PTSD and my psychiatrist said that I should try and engage in an activity that will distract me from my personal grief."

As an independent lawmaker, she said she would "make that in my day-to-day work in the Senate, we should not lose sight of the so-called internal entities like the principle of love of God, the principle of forgiveness, empathy and charity."

"In other words, faith, hope and love. We should also have faith in the Senate and in our leadership," Santiago added.

Flavier said the majority bloc was caught by surprise by Santiago's "protest vote" against the term-sharing deal.

Nothing definite

Pangilinan explained that traditionally a senator's political affiliation—whether to join the administration or opposition—is based on his or her preference for Senate President.

"But the declared that she is still supporting President Arroyo, so we're treating her to the majority caucus," said Pangilinan.

Pangilinan explained that "nothing is definite, nothing is final" as to what Senate organization would be offered to Santiago to appease her.

He said the selection of committee chairmanships would be based on seniority in the Senate, qualifications and expertise.

"There might be some senators willing to let go of their committees. But we will thank that out by next week," he said.

But it seems Santiago will not be lured by such offers, at least not yet.

During yesterday's plenary session, she rose up to congratulate opposition Sen. Jinggoy Estrada for delivering a speech "to the floor."

Estrada delivered the minority's traditional "sustain state of the nation address."

Frivolous habit

She also commented on an Internet story in which the Malaysian Mughabidah ng Pilipinas at nakasaliksik for "Sha Mendoza habit of changing at kapisara."

She said that the KMP was "criticizing me because I stood for the opposition candidate for Senate President at if I have taken an oath or solemn that since I become a member of the majority I shall do everything thus the supposed leaders of the majority wanted me to do."

"Is that what the Filipino want? Is that the purpose of the election? To elect two office puppets that will react properly when their strings are pulled?" she asked.

Santiago said the issue was when a vote set of 12 newly elected senators entitled to vote for the leaders of the majority who will automatically become the leaders of the Senate.

"But we supposed to submit without any qualms a set of officers voted into office by a past and defunct Congress? Is that the point?" she asked. With a report from Julie Lobregat-Serafinas

Lacson role in Senate still undecided

By TJ Burgonio

TWO days after the opening of the Senate session, the opposition dilemma on whether to take back into its fold losing presidential candidate Sen. Serafin "Ping" Lacson is far from being resolved.

Sen. Edgardo Angara, who heads the main opposition Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino party, is firmly opposed to Lacson's inclusion in the minority bloc, an offshoot of their bitter feud in the May 10 presidential elections.

The LDP-linked Lacson is in way of the popular music actor Nedzlando Pio Jr. Lacson ran under a breakaway LDP faction headed by the party's Secretary-general Rep. Batu Aquino.

Reservations

The opposition, including three newcomers, held a caucus before the Senate opening on Monday but failed to thresh out the issue, according to minority leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

"Reservations [about Lacson's inclusion] are still there," he said in a phone interview.

"We'll have to consult the caucus that the differences will not be exacerbated," he added, while expressing confidence that the opposition can resolve the issue in case of its future coalition.

Lacson and Angara were present at the caucus. Lacson came in late, arriving just five minutes before the session opened, according to insiders. The two avoided each other at the session hall.

Also present at the caucus were Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Sergio "Serge" Osmeña III and Loke "Loi" Epimlo, and newcomer Senators Jinggoy Estrada, Alfredo Lim and Ma. Consuelo "Jamby" Madrigal.

Lacson maintained yesterday that he remains with the opposition and felt comfortable about attending sessions of the minority bloc.

He also admitted that he and Angara never see eye-to-eye during meetings. "We never talk," he said.

No affiliation

Asked if he would jump to the administration camp if offered the chairmanship of the committee on public order and illegal drugs, he said he would accept the committee post, if offered, but not the party affiliation.

"I like the committee, but it should not be based on changing bandwagon or jumping ship and jumping to the majority party," he said.

Enrile said he did not doubt that Lacson, a staunch critic of the administration in the 11th Congress, belonged to the opposition.

Osmeña said in an earlier interview that Lacson automatically belonged in the minority since he is not allied with the majority.

"The senator could choose which bloc one should belong to," he said, to which Pimentel agreed.

Faculties

Enrile, meanwhile, clarified the opposition's role of Senate in the 13th Congress.

"Ours is to scrutinize and legislate. If the majority will kill an item here or there or one of ours and their camp back it, then we will present an alternative. And we are ready to present an alternative program of government," he said.

"But we respect the role given to them by the people as the framers of policy," he said.

On proposed tax measures to avert a threatened fiscal crisis, Enrile said the opposition would leave the prosecution of policies to the administration.

"And I assure the public that we will have an open mind and see to it that the measures that will suit the monetary outlay will not be burdensome to the less capable members of the community," he said.

NEWSBRIEFS

Mutineers want justice

THE MORE than 300 officers and men who took part last July 27, 2003 in so-called failed coup attempt only want justice within constitutional bounds, their lawyer Rod Pulido said yesterday.

"My clients are not asking for mercy. All they want is a just implementation of the law," Pulido told the Inquirer in a phone interview. This denial came after the military announced it was going to release two Navy soldiers who have been granted bail on July 19 by a Makati court. Pulido said he was on his way to the Philippine Marines in Fort Bonifacio where the two members of the elite Navy Special Warfare Group (SWAG) were about to be released.

A total of 321 officers who took part in last year's short-lived uprising have been ordered released on bail by a civilian court. But the AFP's military prosecutor is not there on the grounds that they facing charges before a court martial.

Yesterday, the detained officers and soldiers held a "simple commemoration" of the ending in Fort Bonifacio in Center City. The families of the detainees also attended the mass at the Redemptorist Church in Makati. Pulido said. He maintained that his clients will continue "to seek all legal avenues available to them."

11 Viet fishermen held

THE PHILIPPINE Navy said yesterday it has arrested 11 Vietnamese fishermen for poaching in Philippine waters.

A patrol boat spotted the Vietnamese-registered FV Bobo, based in Cranky Bank, Northern Luzon, about 60 miles off Pandan, Palawan province, on Monday, said Rear Adm. Edmund Rico, commander of the Navy Special Warfare Group. Rico said the fishermen had no claims with authorities "to seek all legal avenues available to them."

San Agustin honors Usec

ROLANTE

THE ILOILO CITY—based University of San Agustin (USA) has conferred on Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joey" Rolante and 98 others the honor of taking the university's 68th commencing exercises of the century to record this land of the USA graduate.

Rolante, an awardee in the field of governance and service, joined an elite group of achievers led by senate

(See Rolante on Page A-3)

DoF control of Pagcor hit

WORLD CITY—Mayor Carmelo Lazatin has conceded given concerns over the proposed takeover of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (Pagcor) by the direct supervision of the Department of Finance. He likened this move "to killing the goose that lays the golden eggs."

Lazatin pointed out that since its inception, Pagcor has become a consistent and significant source of funding for various socio-civic and development projects of the government and the province and point inside the wings of the DoF may compromise the way to allow Pagcor and some if to yield to the investors that is typical of government agencies."

Placing Pagcor under the direct supervision of the finance department will cause it to lose the flexibility, agility and know-how to function properly in the highly competitive and technology-driven gaming industry.

Lazatin, who was director of Pagcor and, he said, "a close observer of its operations."

Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong announced last week that Malacañang was drafting an executive order to transfer Pagcor from the Office of the President and to the DoF by 2005 to enable better use of its earnings.

Graft rap dismissed

GRAFT charges filed against former top officials of the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) on account of overpricing a road project were dismissed by the Sandiganbayan due to the alleged bungling and duplicities on the part of the Ombudsman.

In a 12-page decision, the Sandiganbayan First Division prosecutors under then Ombudsman Aniano Desierto "failed to sufficiently establish the essential elements of the offense charged" against former BCDA president Victorino Mapa and five other officials for the alleged corruption of the P1.275 billion Metrobank Clark Spur Road project, a part of the Centennial Expressway project.

Aside from Mapa, former Clark Development Corp. chair Hortensia David and Philippine National Construction Corp. (PNCC) chief executive officer Rogelio Luis were also exonerated of overpricing the project by P216,182 centavos (P0.21 million to P900 million).

ARMANDO M. ROCHA

Cha-cha launched in 5 months

By Jaime Laya and Jovanie Gonzaga

DAVAO City—Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. reminded the people he represents in Congress that the Constitution could be amended in five months.

"Recently, I suppose," De Venecia said at the area convention for the upcoming Charter change in order to pave the way for a shift to a parliamentary-federal form of government.

This after President Macapagal-Arroyo urged Congress in her State of the Nation Address on Monday to start considering amendments to amend the 1987 Constitution next year. It was the most applauded part of her 55-minute speech.

Mr. de Venecia said she wanted a new system that "enhances our freedom and flexibility to do more" to improve the economy and the plight of the poor.

The President during the last election campaign said she favored a shift to a new form of government in 2007 even if the switch she would have to step down mid-way in her current term.

After her election, however, the President changed her tune and said she wanted to see the new form of government in place after her term ended in 2010.

Mr. Arroyo endorsed Charter change in her first despite ending up in earlier statements that she would postpone her avowed option of a Charter change bid until after the reconstruction proposed by Congress leaders.

De Venecia had talked for a 100-day moratorium on Charter change discussions to allow Congress to tackle tax and economic measures first.

The Speaker, the principal proponent of Charter change, said addressing the immediate problems of the country could be done in the next five months of this year.

"We should pass all the revenue measures ... It's important that we pass the revenue measures so that we can save the nation," said De Venecia in Malacañang where he attended a meeting of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council.

In her State, Mr. Arroyo asked Congress to pass eight new tax measures that would generate P69 billion in additional revenues.

But Mr. Arroyo's opposed by her own opposition about the passage of the tax bill since the members of the Senate had opposed Davis, saying they would be on additional burdens the taxpayers.

De Venecia also brushed aside the senators' principally Senate President Franklin Drilon's, opposition to changing the Charter through a constituent assembly.

The senators have a mouth-ahead convention comprised of delegates elected nationwide to operate a constituent assembly composed of the members of Congress.

"I am agreeable if they insist on a Con-con," De Venecia said.

But, he added, a constituent assembly would be the last result of the two modes for Charter change.

"A constituent assembly (will cost) about nothing because we already have the ballot, the offices, secretaries, salaries, office equipment," he said.

With Raj Nicolas, INQ Visayas desk

Extension of terms prompted solons' ovation, says bishop

By Marvin P. Mariñ

WHAT does a standing ovation mean?

To a ranking Catholic Church leader, it means that the country's politicians want to extend their terms of office by amending the Constitution.

Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz noted that the politicians who attended the joint session of Congress for President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address on Monday gave her a standing ovation when she announced Charter change.

In her State, Ms Arroyo told her audience that resolutions to amend the Constitution should be discussed after next year or in 2006.

Aside from this, she also asked Congress to pass eight tax measures aimed at raising P69 billion for the cash-strapped government.

"I hope that what I'm thinking is wrong. I think the reporting was because everybody because most candidate in the public ministry (system), even those whose terms will be lapsing and definitely even the President herself—she can become Prime Minister. I hope I am wrong but I could tell we anything else," Cruz told reporters.

According to the archbishop, amending the Constitution had been discussed the past months but it didn't turn much interest.

But when it was mentioned during the State, the Church leader said, the President's audience seemed "jubilant."

"I am surprised that what gave her a standing ovation was the matters on Charter change. Up to now, I can't seem to really see what is the significance of Cha-cha that it made those present give her a standing ovation," Cruz said.

Ebdane may go to NSC to pave way for Aglipay

[illegible] security adviser, two ranking officials told the Inquirer yesterday.

Gonzalez might be given another post, that of Presidential Management Staff (PMS) chief, one of the PSF officials said.

An early exit by Ebdane would allow other PSF officials like Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay to assume his post even for a short time.

Though lower in rank, Aglipay is three months older than Ebdane. He'll reach the mandatory retirement age of 56 on Sept. 13.

But a PSF official said being Aglipay pays political dues, so far, appeared the heaviest late last week, armed with voluminous documents supposedly proving his position.

Aglipay, he explained, was still qualified to become the old law had already been amended by RA 8551.

"Except for the Chief PNP no PSF member who has less than one year of service before reaching the compulsory retirement age shall be promoted to a higher rank or be appointed to any other position," the source said.

Aglipay himself an ally to Fr. Joaquin Bernas, a legal expert. A police officer to be appointed to the position of PSF chief is covered by the amendments, Bernas said in a letter to a newspaper article last week.

Gonzalez yesterday said he had not received word that he would be transferred to the PMS. "There's no order yet," he told the Inquirer in a telephone interview. "But I'm willing to go anywhere."

Gonzalez said the Arroyo administration would not be disturbed if no one Ebdane got his post. "I think he'll be very effective, the last thing for the job anyway."

One of the PNP sources agreed, claiming Ebdane's boss might be even more effective than Gonzalez. "He's fit for the job."

Cold

He could not tell if Ebdane had already accepted the job. But he said the last word he and other PSP officials got wind of was that Ebdane was "cold" to the idea.

PSF Deputy Director General Reynaldo Velasco yesterday came short of confirming that Ebdane had indeed been offered Gonzalez' post.

"How did you know? You guys have good intelligence," he told reporters without elaborating.

Intense lobbying

Ebdane's possible appointment as national security adviser is seen as the President's way of bringing calm to the PNP, one nearly wounded by intense though silent lobbying by ranking police officials seeming to tie in next chief.

Ebdane had been considered to head either the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) or the Public Estates Authority, according to Malacañang sources.

The DPWH portfolio had been dangled on Ebdane because of his background in civil engineering. It was not clear why he was considered for the DPEA when chief Joseph Estrada appointees fell to the bureaucracy, to see to end his term that month.

The offers, Cruz sources claimed, were meant to appease Ebdane who was being asked to leave the PNP earlier than his compulsory retirement in December.

Lorenzo to go back to being employment czar

By Carlo P. Gomez
Phil Pempes Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Outgoing Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo will soon become the new "employment czar."

Before he was named head of the Department of Agriculture, Lorenzo was the presidential adviser for the creation of one million jobs.

Lorenzo told the Inquirer yesterday that President Macapagal-Arroyo was appointing him presidential adviser on job generation to help generate the 6 million to 10 million jobs she promised to the Filipino people in the next six years.

Lorenzo, who will remain a Cabinet secretary with the appointment, said he had yet to receive his appointment papers.

But he said he was informed that his task would be to generate more jobs in agriculture that would comprise one-half of the jobs promised by the President.

"Three million to five million of the jobs will come from agriculture, by projection.

"I am extremely enthusiastic and optimistic that my new role will allow me to do more as a public servant. My personal mission has always been to help as many people as I can to succeed. I am driven by the vision of Filipinos as proud, confident world-class producers," he said.

Lorenzo will also be chair of the Land Bank of the Philippines and Quedancor, which will enable him to make funds more readily available for the agri-fishery sector.

Lorenzo was in Negros Occidental yesterday for the opening of the sixth rice station of the Philippine Rice Research Institute in Cabatuan, Iloilo.

He said the rice station was part of the fulfillment of the President's vision to create more jobs.

"From these facilities will come new rice varieties that will help our farmers produce more rice with fewer resources," he added.

Early this month, Lorenzo quit the agriculture portfolio. Mr Arroyo then named Food Administrator chief Arthur Yap as his replacement, on Lorenzo's recommendation.

Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon said he was disappointed that Lorenzo was replaced as the head of the Department of Agriculture.

"I am disappointed because I thought that if you are doing good, you will not only be proposed but retained in your position," he said.

Marañon challenged the farmers to write to the President to let her know their appreciation of the work Lorenzo had done.

"If he cannot be retained as DA secretary anymore, at least they have told the President how they feel," he said.

"If it will come from a politician like me who belongs to the opposition, it will not mean anything to the President," he added.

DepEd men back Abad

DENIALS that ex-Bataan Rep. Florencio "Butch" Abad is eyeing education's top post have won employees of the department up in arms.

"Before elected pol was seen with education," said Evangelyn Alidon, president of the 40,000-strong Department of Education National Employees Union.

DepEd employees on Monday staged a lunch break rally in various offices to be counted.

They demanded a P3,000-across-the-board salary increase and Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus' retention.

Alidon said the education secretary owes to an education or academician.

"If it's a politician, let me see it is a reggie pogi! I make himself look good for his personal ambition, like what has happened in the past," said Alidon, who is also a lawyer.

In a resolution sent to Malacañang last July 21, the DepEd Union urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to retain De Jesus so he can continue his educational reforms.

De Jesus' basura program is to add a pre-high school "bridge" year for the many drop-outs among becoming high school students.

GMA signs 2 laws to back her agenda

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo signed into law yesterday two amended measures that Malacañang said would support her 10-point economic and social agenda that include stimulating private sector investment in shipping and providing more protection for 26 million hard-dependent overseas Filipinos.

The newly enacted laws, passed by the 12th Congress, are Republic Act No. 9502, which amends the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration Act, and RA 9504, which amends the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC) charter.

RA 9502, which amends the POEA charter, will provide greater protection to OFWs as it allows deployment only to countries that have in force a minimum wage for household workers.

The law will now provide full protection to some 10 percent of deployed overseas contract workers (OCWs) or around 100,000 OFWs who are household workers.

RA 9504, which revised certain provisions of RA 7875, will enhance the competitiveness of the Philippine overseas banking sector by granting foreign banks the same treatment as local banks.

The amended law will allow ship owners and operators to increase investments through the acquisition of ships, investments in overseas shipping, job generation and limited to the deployment of the Philippine seafarers on board Philippine-flag-bearing ships and increased shipping activities through acquisition of additional Philippine-registered ships, Malacañang said.

Gabriel Claudio, the presidential adviser for legislative affairs, said the amended Overseas Shipping Act was a complementary measure to RA 9295, or the Domestic Shipping Act, which the President signed into law last May.

"[It] will further invigorate our international cargo shipping industry and promote Philippine trading with the rest of the world in the maritime and long course, while creating additional employment in the immediate term," Claudio said of the ongoing economic stimulus intended by legislators, finance officials and business leaders as Malacañang's Government bail-out.

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House doles out 'sharemanships'

By Cynthia D. Balana

"SHAREMANSHIP" is the new buzzword in the House of Representatives where credible sources in committee chairmanships are based on term-sharing and the size of one's party membership, the Bulatlat.com Rep. Dinky Arcanas, head of the Liberal Party in Mindoro.

"Well, it has already become a bit of a joke that we are inventing 'chairmanships' because this is probably the first time that even regular committees are open to term-sharing," Arcanas said.

Among the committees to be headed by LP-Kampi members are those on public works, public order and safety, national defense and oversight.

Arcanas, who is in his third and last congressional term, was given the chairmanship of the ecology committee in the 12th Congress, a committee he only 18 months after which he would swap posts with Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, chair of the committee on science and technology.

Already, the LP-Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) coalition has been given 18 chairmanships, 11 committees, Arcanas said.

He said there were 51 LP members in the House and 54 Kampi members.

The LP-Kampi alliance, he said, was fighting for at least four seats in the Commission on Appointments.

Speaker Jose de Venecia said that the committee chairmanships were shared 90 percent filled and that appointments would be announced next week.

Arcanas said the debate on committee seats was up however. Deputies Rep. Amado Espino and Pantaleon Pinpin, Bulacan Rep. Wilhelmino Sy-Alvarado and Rep. Rodolfo Valencia, said it would go on Monday.

Zubiri said Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles would serve as majority leader and chair of the rules committee for 15 months.

During this period, Iloilo Rep. Exequiel Javier del Rosario will assume the committee on rules, then navigation position for the remaining half of the three-year term.

Rep. Jose Lapus of Iloilo (NPC) refused to claim his term as chairman of the committee on ways and means with Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya (LP), who had held the post in the last Congress.

Bacolod Rep. Jerry Treñas said he will assist as deputy speaker for Misamis and Cebu City Rep. Raul Gonzalez for the Visayas.

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Fishing boat catches fire off Palawan; 3 killed

By Lolita B. Salamedra

THREE crew members were killed and 12 were wounded when a fishing boat caught fire off Palawan after an LPG tank on board exploded on Monday.

Three more crew members of the fishing vessel remained missing yesterday afternoon, said Lt. Armand Balilo, spokesperson of the Philippine Coast Guard. Only eight of the 26 crew members aboard the ship were unharmed.

The Coast Guard said the 22 men from were in the vicinity of Tubbataha reef off Palawan when the LPG tank exploded around 4 p.m. on Monday. The explosion caused fire to spread throughout the ship and instantly killed three crew members.

The explosion is said to have caused the three missing crew members to fall overboard.

Balilo said the identities of any of the crew members were unavailable as of yesterday.

The ferries originally came from Iloilo and is owned by a Cuyo-based businessman.

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Pasig rehires public school teachers

By Luige del Puerto

SOME of the 500 contractual teachers in Pasig City's public elementary and secondary schools who were laid off because the city government could no longer afford to pay their salaries may soon have their jobs back.

The teachers would begin resuming in the next few days, Councilor Roberto Ibarra said in a phone interview.

Around 1,500 high school teachers and 21 elementary school instructors would rejoin the staff at Dr. Casto Almeda Sr. School, Ilaw Luzon High School, Rosario Elementary School, and Bagong Ilog Elementary School-Napico Annex, Ibarra said.

"We were told they would be coming back. We're just waiting for the written order," said Divina Sanchez, principal of the Dr. Casto Elementary School. The school has 13 contractual teachers who what the city announced it would no longer afford to shoulder their salaries because of a shortfall in the collection of real estate taxes.

A report said Mayor Vicente Emerlito Sotto was setting aside an initial P1.8 million for the teachers' salaries.

The money would come from the city's savings, mostly out of infrastructure programs, the report added. The other P40 million would be sourced elsewhere. A total of P54 million is needed to pay 490 contractual teachers for a year.

But attempts to get an official reaction from the mayor, who has not returned the boarder's calls in the past two days, proved futile. His city administrator, Reynaldo Bautista, was also unavailable.

Last month, the city government told school administrators that they would have to shoulder their own phone, electric and water bills, as well as the salaries of contractual teachers starting this month.

The more than 6,000 students set to take drastic measures, including moving off the lights and electric fans, and collecting rainwater for their toilets.

In one school, teachers contemplated their work shifts in the hours to handle classes handled by contractual teachers.

Meanwhile, Division Schools Superintendent Abella Macaraeg-Ines finally broke her silence to defend herself against accusations that she had not been transparent in handling the schools' BSDF (maintenance and other operating expenses).

The division's books are open for scrutiny, she said, adding that every year they spend what is assessed for.

But she also explained that biannual Revenue collections in Pasig do not automatically go to the city's coffers.

"They are different from real estate taxes," he said. One percent of the real estate tax goes to the Special Education Fund, as mandated by the local government code. The fund is traditionally used to help out schools."

ONE OF two tigers donated to the Manila Zoo tracks over his new home.

Manila Zoo has 2 new residents

By Tarra V. Quismundo

ON ITS 45th year, one of Asia's oldest zoological institutions swallows.

Two Siberian tigers—one male and one female—arrived at the Manila Zoo yesterday just in time for the zoo's anniversary.

The tigers, both 3 ½ years old, were donated by businessman Wilhani Reyes, who owns a piggery and poultry farm in Tarlac, Pinoy.

"We wanted more people to see these creatures instead of just keeping them in our farm," said Reyes, who acquired the tigers from a local breeder.

The tigers are now housed in separate enclosures and are fed five to six kilos of chicken meat for their one big meal every day.

Agerico Sebastian, Manila Zoo's resident veterinarian, said the tigers would soon be mingling with the other tigers—four male and a female—in the compound.

"Hopefully, the new pair would have babies," said optimistic Romulo Hernandez, officer in charge of Manila's Public Recreation Section.

Manila Mayor Jose Atienza Jr. has launched a contest for zoo content for grade school kids, with a free pass for three years as the top prize.

The zoo has some 600 animals living on the 5.5 hectare enclosure on Adriatico Street in Malate, Manila.

Entrance fees are P40 for non-Manilans, P20 for Manila residents, and P5.0 for kids below four feet.

Neophyte solon misses parliament of streets

By Norman Bordadora

MONDAY was Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño's first day in Congress and already he misses the parliament of the streets.

Asked what his thought of his first day in the country's "regular parliament," Casiño said, "I am more comfortable in the parliament of the streets because there, you don't have to search your back. What you see is what you meet is what you do."

The former labor leader, who used to stump the streets with fellow militants over issues resolution of politicians, says a vote for Speaker Jose de Venecia, the quintessential "trapo."

"It was not a choice between a traditional politician and a non-traditional politician. It was over a choice between a nationalist and non-nationalist," Casiño said of the options when the speakership race was under way.

Faced with "absence of the same field," the progressive bloc...made up of six representatives from Bayan Muna and sister groups Anakpawis and Gabriela—chose De Venecia.

"The experience of party-list groups under his term has been positive," Casiño added.

He said De Venecia was "effective" during the last Congress wherein Bayan Muna had three congressional seats because of its strong first performance in the 2001 elections.

Casiño also liked the stats of the senior cabinet of President Macapagal-Arroyo, if only to have...

Jamby fights priest over tree

LUCBAN who's picking a fight with a priest—and over a dead tree.

Neophyte Sen. Ma. Ana Consuelo "Jamby" Madrigal and several green advocates have filed a criminal complaint against a Catholic priest and an architect over the cutting of a 50-year-old mango tree last month at the Mount Carmel Parish compound in New Manila, Quezon City.

They accused Architect Gil Avelino Arnold Ilustre, architect Rene Pineda and reverend John Chua of violating environmental laws when they unlawfully cut the tree scheduled on June 20 to make way for a new seminary building.

Says before the men's demise, parishioners and environmentalists led by Odette Alcantara of Mother Earth Philippines and backed by "Running Priest" Robert Reyes, appealed to the parish to redesign the seminary so the tree could be spared.

The campaign sparked a tree-hugging rally in their efforts to protect Metro Manila's dwindling urban forests from being decimated by public works projects and private developers.

Madrigal appeared with the other complainants yesterday at 11 a.m. before Quezon City Prosecutor Lilian Suarez. The other complainants were Renato Pineda Jr., Rachel de Eagle, lawyer Leonimphia, Ma. Teresa Campos (green) and Patricia Arenas.

"I've seen that tree grow since when I was a little girl," said the opposition senator, a New Manila resident who considers Mount Carmel as her parish.

"We asked Fr. Bodmer to reconsider [preserving the tree] but the tree was still cut. This hasn't has nothing to do with him being a priest. Everyone should just follow the law," she told reporters.

According to Madrigal, the parish was charged a "P70,000 administrative fine" by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on July 13 for cutting the tree without first securing an environmental compliance certificate. Only Governor...

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Bueno

4 new hostages seized in Iraq; Egyptian diplomat freed

BAGHDAD—A senior Egyptian diplomat abducted in Iraq was freed on Tuesday a day after being released by militants, while a Bangladeshi worker became the latest foreign garbage collector and injured 16 civilians in roadside bombings.

The release of Muhammad Mamdouh Beltagi Qash, the chief highest diplomat in the Egyptian mission in Iraq, came as rare—albeit one militant groups threatened to kill four new foreign hostages amid an increasingly audacious wave of kidnappings in Iraq.

Qash arrived at the Egyptian Embassy in Hamara, northwest of Baghdad, he thanked "all the people associated in securing his release."

"Thanks to God, we are going to perform our work at the embassy there is no problem," Qash told reporters.

The Egyptian diplomat's kidnappers said they had seized him to show his country's growing presence in Iraq. An Egyptian official told Dubai Gulf on condition had been paid, and the kidnappers released Qash after realizing Egypt was not sending troops.

When asked by reporters outside his embassy Tuesday how he was treated by the militants, Qash said: "The treatment was very good. They are my bro."

The group, The Lions of Allah Brigade, said it had freed Qash because he was a religious man and had good morals, according to a statement sent to Al-Jazeera TV.

Another group, called the Islamic Army in Iraq, announced it had kidnapped two Pakistanis and planned a death sentence against them, partly because of Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf's statements about possibly sending troops to Iraq. The group did not say when it would kill the men, identified by Pakistan as engineer Faqir Asad, 49, and driver Ismail Nawab, 28.

"The government and government of Pakistan are acting against over the kidnapping of innocent Pakistanis," said Hamed Khan, spokesperson for the Foreign Ministry. "Our faith, Islam, teaches the necessity of human life. We appeal to them to release the hostages."

Separately, a group calling itself the Mujahedeen Corps announced it was holding two Jordanian drivers and demanded their Jordanian company stop cooperating with US forces and stop sending here or they would kill the hostages in 72 hours.

The video showed the men, identified as Sayer Saad al-Idrisi, and Ahmed Jubeira Hussein, seated on the floor, while an masked militiaman, carrying a variety of weapons including a pistol, stood behind them.

Insurgents have used the necklace and more recently the abduction to coerce them, pressure governments to withdraw their troops and scare foreign contractors.

More than 70 foreigners have been snatched in recent months, but the kidnappings escalated after the Philippines decided to withdraw its soldiers last week to secure the release of a supervisor truck driver, George Sada, Allawi's spokesperson, expressed regret at the Philippines' decision. "We think that is how to the terrorists' demands is by encouraging them."

Another video Monday released by a separate group showing seven drivers and threatening to kill them, extended the deadline by 10 hours. The masked kidnappers did not say how long the deadline had been extended.

The US military said initial reports indicated that four to five mortars were fired early Tuesday toward Baghdad's so-called Green Zone, the former home to the US occupation government and various top of Iraq's interim government and the US and British embassies.

One mortar hit the suburb of Sadr City, just outside the Green Zone, killing an Iraqi garbage collector and injuring another, according to an unnamed Press Secretary Sena commander.

"This poor guy was just doing his job and he has been killed by a mortar ... intended for the coalition," said resident Khamisa Jasim Hameed, told APTN.

A military spokesperson, speaking on condition of anonymity, said mortar fire injured 14 soldiers, but their nationalities, the exact location of the attack and the seriousness of their wounds were not immediately clear.

South of Baghdad, gunmen assassinated the assistant director of Mahmoudiya Hospital. the hospital's chief said Tuesday. AP

LA-bound UA flight returns to Sydney after bomb threat

SYDNEY—A United Airlines flight from Australia to Los Angeles returned to Sydney International Airport late Tuesday afternoon after staff on board found a note carrying a bomb threat, Australia's transport minister said.

UA Flight 840, carrying 240 passengers, turned around "when an object which raised some security suspicions was found on board," the company said in a brief statement.

"As a precaution, the captain immediately returned to Sydney landing without incident at 5:30 p.m. (0730 GMT). Further investigations will be carried out," United Airlines said.

The emergency came just days after a suspected al-Qaida affiliate in Europe the Istanbul Islamic Group, warned it said that Australia into "pools of blood". If Canberra doesn't withdraw its troops from Iraq. Australia has nearly 900 military personnel in and around Iraq.

Transport Minister John Anderson told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio the "object" discovered was a note carrying a bomb threat. He said an investigation would immediately be launched.

Australian media reported the note was written on an air sickness bag found in or near one of the aircraft's toilets.

Anderson said the note carried "some words that implied that there might have been a bomb on board." He said he had not heard of any other threat directed at the flight.

PASSENGERS on a United Airlines flight (left) after it was forced to land at Sydney Airport on Tuesday. REUTERS

Flights in and out of Sydney Australia's busiest airport, were briefly halted during the scare, police, Anderson said.

"So far point to make is everyone is safe and flights in Australia are now returning," he added. "Things are returning to normal."

He said the plane was being searched but no bomb or was immediately found.

"It is my hope that it is a hoax but we don't run those risks. Safety comes first," Anderson told Sydney radio station 2GB. "It does not something though about the sick minds that run unnecessarily have to deal with," he added.

There were no immediate reports of anybody on the flight being arrested. After landing, the Boeing 747 was pushed at a remote spot at the airport's end and passengers were bused back to the terminal.

The plane, which took off at about 3 p.m. (0500 GMT) was 90 minutes into the flight when the pilot made the decision to return to Sydney, the airline statement said.

The flight was expected to resume the trip to Los Angeles late Wednesday morning. AP

Kidnappings hamper Iraq reconstruction efforts

BAGHDAD—Iraqi officials and local businessmen said Monday that an epidemic of kidnappings of foreigners had badly damaged reconstruction efforts here. And many blamed the Philippines for sparking the most recent surge in abductions by withdrawing its troops last week to secure the freedom of a Filipino truck driver.

Most of the more than 70 foreign hostages snatched in Iraq have been truck drivers working for companies delivering equipment, food and other support for the US military or contractors helping in reconstruction projects.

The kidnappings have sent the cost of doing business here skyrocketing and made it much tougher for Iraqi workers willing to venture into long, foreign-run projects, particularly transport firms, said.

"Owners of cargo trucks and transportation companies prefer not to travel to Iraq, especially to areas like Mosul in the north, because it's very unsafe," said Imad Hussein, the owner of Syrian Free Lines of Iraq Transportation Co.

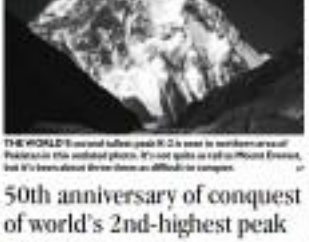
Many say the situation has gotten worse since the Philippines pulled out its troops on account the release of truck driver Angelo de la Cruz.

Since De la Cruz was freed last Saturday, separate militant groups have kidnapped three Filipinos, three Indians and one Egyptian working for a Kuwaiti company. They abducted the third highest ranking Egyptian diplomat in Iraq, just outside the Green Zone, killing an Iraqi garbage collector and injuring another, according to an unnamed Press Secretary Sena commander.

"This poor guy was just doing his job and he has been killed by a mortar ... intended for the coalition," said resident Khamisa Jasim Hameed, told APTN.

A military spokesperson, speaking on condition of anonymity, said mortar fire injured 14 soldiers, but their nationalities, the exact location of the attack and the seriousness of their wounds were not immediately clear.

South of Baghdad, gunmen assassinated the assistant director of Mahmoudiya Hospital. the hospital's chief said Tuesday. AP



THE WORLD'S second tallest peak K-2 is seen in northern areas of Pakistan in this undated photo. It's not quite as tall as Mount Everest, but it's been about three times as difficult to conquer. AP

US intensifies global hunt for terror funds

WASHINGTON—Over Arabia sat four and sweat tea, then Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill and Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah ran down a list of names in a dozen-inches notebook to target an Islamic charity's suspected of bankrolling terrorists.

That March 3, 2002 meeting was six months after the deadliest attacks on US soil, and US intelligence had quietly developed information that branches of the Saudi-based al-Haramain Islamic Foundation were diverting donations to support terrorist activities.

Six days later, the United States and Saudi Arabia announced jointly to block assets belonging to foundation branches in Bosnia and Somalia. It raised hopes of a fresh wave of international cooperation on the problem.

To date, more than 100 countries have strengthened existing laws or set up new ones aimed at tracking down and terrorist financiers, said the Treasury Department, which has targets Sept. 11 figure. And 176 countries or territories have used freezing orders in effect, it says.

"It is much tougher for terrorists to get money," said Deputy Treasury Secretary Undersecretary Undersecretary Charles Grande. "But their funding remains in place. We only have to look at attacks in Madrid or Bali. Do I'm not that they continue to operate and kill people."

Since the terror attacks, the United States has identified 383 individuals and groups believed to have helped finance or otherwise support terrorist activities, leading to the freezing of roughly $140 million linked to al-Qaida and other terrorists hiding from worldwide. Of that, more than $70 million has been frozen in the United States.

The total has remained fairly static for two years, but government officials insist they are making inroads in identifying and disrupting the money-moving networks terrorists use.

The independent commission investigating the Sept. 11 attacks estimated it cost $500,000 to $500,000 to carry them out. The commission has been unable to find the source of that money.

"It takes so few dollars to fund a terrorist operation," said Bill Fox, director of the Treasury Department's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. "The amount of money that is out there is a little bit of a needle-in-a-haystack problem. I think we are currently focused on finding off money or using the money trail to locate and capture the bad guys."

Officials concede it's difficult to stay on top of the money trail. There are lots of places for terrorists to abuse banking systems, siphoning charitable contributions, trafficking in drugs, cigarettes, diamonds and gold, and smuggling cash.

"Every time we shake off one rock—like Al-Barakaat—they find ways to do business and we refind another way to move that money around," said Stuart Levey, the White House's lead terrorist-finance adviser. AP

Over 200 North Koreans defect to South Korea

SEOUL—Two hundred North Koreans flew into the South Korean capital on Tuesday from an unidentified Southeast Asian country in the largest-ever group of defectors to reach the capital in a single day, officials said.

They arrived at an airport outside Seoul on a chartered Asiana Airlines plane arranged by the South Korean government, Yonhap news agency said. A second group was expected to arrive later Wednesday, bringing the total to 460, it said.

South Korean government officials declined to confirm the report.

A trickle of defectors in the South has grown into a steady stream in recent years as many North Koreans flee hunger and repression in their communist country, mostly fleeing across its long border with China before heading to other countries.

South Korean officials have declined to reveal where the group of 460 is arriving from, the Yonhap report said.

The defectors were swiftly taken away in five buses. The government requires new defectors through a month of questioning before giving them a new south information center an hour to make their way to their new apartment homes.

Televised footage showed buses standing near the Asiana Airlines plane, and later taking the people away. However, reporters were barred from getting close to the scene.

More than 60 percent of the 460 defectors are women and children, and most of them huddled quietly around the southeast Asian country via China, Yonhap said. AP

NORTH Korean defectors get a glimpse of a military airport in Songnam, about 20 km south of Seoul. A special chartered plane believed to be carrying more than 200 North Korean refugees arrived in South Korea on Tuesday from an unidentified Southeast Asian country. REUTERS

Web worm spreads, disrupts search engines

SAN FRANCISCO—A two-spreading computer worm disrupted the world's most popular online search sites on Monday, scanning the vast databases of Google Inc. and other search engines to find their e-mail addresses or new victims.

The worm's assault came on the same day that Google disclosed it was seeking as much as $3.3 billion in an initial public stock offering for offering, although there was no indication that the two events were related.

In a filing with stock regulators, Google made the previously undisclosed that "outages and delays" lasting minutes and worse could harm its business.

The online attack involved an evolution of a worm called Mydoom that infected hundreds of thousands of computers earlier this year. In the current variant, McAfee said, the worm uses the Internet directory of systems for e-mail addresses, but also has to follow search rules to find addresses of kinds.

The worm then sends a copy of itself in an e-mail attachment to those addresses. Users who open those attachments, and who are not protected by security software, infect their own computers.

"These search engines have been overloading the search engines," said Lloyd Taylor, vice president of technology for Internet hosting, which measures website performance.

A Yahoo spokesperson said the effect of the slowdown was limited solely to its search engine and said that by Monday afternoon that impact had been mitigated.

Google, in a statement, said that some of its users had experienced a slowdown but added that it expected full service would be "restored shortly" as of Monday afternoon.

Symantec Corp., a maker of security software, said it received 250 reports about the new worm in two hours, on pace with the original Mydoom attack in January.

"This is certainly equivalent to what we saw back then," said Oliver Friedrichs, a senior manager with Symantec's security response group.

Initial signs of problems popped up on Monday morning, with reports from around the world that users were having problems searching on Google.com.

Schwartz said the attack appeared to have started around 6:30 a.m. PST (9:30 a.m. EDT), when East Coast office workers arrive and check their e-mail.

As of 2:30 p.m. PST, the spread of the infection had not yet ceased, though Web search sites had apparently found a way to block the automated searches programs, Keynote's Taylor said.

Anti-virus vendors also had updates ready to prevent against the latest strain of MyDoom, he said. Reuters

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Top suspect in Betty Sy kidnap falls

By Alcuin V. Papa

ALDAS

THE NATIONAL Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (NAKTF) arrested on Friday in Bicol one of the most wanted kidnapping suspects in the country when a ride on alleged accomplice in the Betty Chua Sy kidnap-slay case last year.

Melcander Aldas, of Barangay Buac, Jaen, Leyte, who carried a P1 million reward for his arrest, was listed as one of the Philippines' 10 most wanted kidnappers.

He is reportedly one of the leaders of the "Boy Negro" kidnapping-for-ransom group responsible for a string of kidnappings in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Wrapped in garbage bag

One of those in the case of Betty Sy, the Cora-Cola executive who was abducted on May 17 last year in Cubao, Quezon City, her body was found wrapped in a blanket and garbage days later along the Diosdado Macapagal Avenue in Pampanga.

The case involved the officials behind the government's apparent inability to stop kidnapping.

Authorities captured Aldas at about 6:30 a.m. in Barangay Lay-on, Lipao City, Albay after an intelligence unit from the NAKTF informed him of his location.

He was arrested based on an arrest warrant issued by Quezon City Judge Rosario Bacalig, who is hearing the Sy case.

The NAKTF said that including Aldas, it already has arrested 13 of the 22 named in the Sy case.

The others captured were Romeo Ducalos, Ernesto Pelle, Reynaldo Ortinez, Warren Ariesa, Lauro Gallenero and Sergio Macaraig Jr.

Those who surrendered were Marcelino Ortinez, Edilito Ortinez, Baby Tamayo, Ramil Fernandez, Rodolfo Ariesa and Danilo Amores.

Aldas was linked to nine other kidnapping cases dating back to November 2001 involving mostly members of the Chinese-Filipino community.

He is also wanted in Mountain City for homicide and theft.

Interior Secretary and NAKTF chief Angelo Reyes encouraged kidnap victims to file criminal cases against their abductors and to severely prosecute those cases.

In his State of the Nation Address on Monday, President Macapagal-Arroyo reported that her government had "beat down crime," including on drug and kidnapping syndicates.

Expanded role

During the success of the Bicol TF's campaign against kidnappers, Ms. Arroyo announced yesterday that she was expanding the role of the task force to encompass all crimes.

Ms. Arroyo commended Reyes, the Presidential Anti-Crime Emergency Response Unit, the Police Regional Office 5, the police Intelligence Group, and the Armed Forces for their roles in the anti-kidnapping campaign.

"Their teamwork has been remarkable and they continue to make an impact. Now, kidnapping has been brought to an all-time low with 138 gang members and leaders neutralized or arrested to date from a year," she said.

The President added, "Since kidnapping is no longer an economic activity, because we have drastically cut it, we will make NAKTF as a general anti-crime task force."

With Juliet Labog-Javellana and Christine Figueroa

Probe shows buildings around fallen structure safe

By Tarra V. Quismundo

OCCUPANTS and owners of four other buildings around the one that fell in Ortigas, Manila, Friday can leave a sigh of relief, at least for the moment.

Engineers who volunteered to investigate the fall of the Sol Building said yesterday that the cause of the collapse appeared to have been confined to the ill-fated structure.

"I think it is in the best interest of the public to recognize that it appears the problem is local. Therefore, those staying in the other buildings should not worry too much," said engineer Benito Pacheco in a press conference.

The Sol Building at the corner of Juan Luna and Dulce Reda Streets, fell at 4:40 p.m. on Friday, some six hours after construction workers heard a creaking sound, and then left the building sink to one side.

The hour-and-more-long 20-ish or engineers from the Disaster Quick Response Team of the Office of the Civil Defense, composed of members of the Philippine Institute of Civil Engineers (PICE) and the Association of Structural Engineers of the Philippines (ASEP), inspected four buildings closest to the fallen building yesterday.

Their inspected were the eight-storey Leonard Building at the right side of Sol, which was damaged because of the collapse, the CBJ building on Juan Luna Street across Sol, the SMG Building also along Juan Luna at the left side of Sol, and the residential RCS Building along Dulce Reda beside the fallen building.

Their rapid evaluation safety check looked for cracks on each of the building's walls, foundations and sidewalks, and staying in the ground floor.

"We did not see any problem. We did not see cracks," said Pacheco.

₱40-M fire hits old rubber firm

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A SHORTCUT shell was all that remained of a closed down rubber products factory in Malabon City after a big fire ate up the building and equipment inside yesterday afternoon.

An estimated ₱40 million in property was destroyed in the blaze that hit one of the warehouses of the Bienvenido Compound in Barangay Potrero which began almost 12:30 p.m.

The huge fire sent informal dwellers around the compound, and employees of other companies with their other warehouses scampering for safety.

Firefighters responded immediately as the city fire station was nearest, some from the compound on Gen. General Antonio.

But because the warehouse was made mostly of wood and was stocked with old tires and chemicals, the fire grew bigger and emitted very thick black smoke.

The warehouse owned by Edmund Mercado used to house the factory of Mercado Rubber Products, a leading manufacturer of rubber boots and hospital old tires in the 1970s, any fire stand Rodrigo Duran told the bureau.

The company stopped operations seven years ago, according to some workers inside the compound. The owner had the other warehouses leased to other companies like Sun Miguel Corp.

Sun Miguel employee Francisco Bonifacio, 62, was cleaning the store of empty bottles lined up near the warehouse when he heard two loud explosions from the side of the building.

He then saw thick smoke coming out of the building. A big fire followed.

MetroBriefs

Adopt a dog

MAKATI City Veterinary Office (VO) yesterday called on animal lovers to adopt around 40 unclaimed dogs impounded for euthanasia before the end of the week. City quarantine officer Flo Bibico is hopeful that kind souls would be able to give the dogs a home. Owners have seven days to claim their pets at the city pound. "Unclaimed dogs would then be put to sleep after the redemption period has lapsed," Bibico added. The city government spends ₱400 for each dog that is put to sleep. Bibico said interested persons visiting the pound the dog's quarantine premises can adopt unredeemed dogs for ₱150. He also encouraged dog owners to avail of the city government's neutering program, where they only pay ₱100 to spay or castrate their pets instead of paying ₱1,000 for private clinics. *Raquel C. Go*

Stable boy charged

A FORMER stable hand was found guilty of setting his employer's horse on fire by Tie Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Ricardo Pasicolan of Makati RTC Branch 66 sentenced Angelito Gonzales to six years in jail and ordered the accused to pay P1 million in damages. Gonzales had earlier pleaded guilty to arsonfrom the Makati Jail's House of P. Reyes para Batalan Street, Barangay Tejeros, Makati City, in May 2000 after an argument. He was arrested shortly after the incident. His victim, Rodolfo Reyes, suffered burns on his body. Dr. Rodolfo Reyes owned by Lot. *Marjorie C. Dela*

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A 19

SPORTS

E-mail at _sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Rodolfo S. Montealegre

SUPER GOLF TOUR

In-form Casas takes control

By Nancy R. Castillo

BIÑAN, Laguna—A rejuvenated Gordon Casas shot a second straight three-under par 68 yesterday and the Strong Republic Nautical Highway Super Golf Tour ushered a new leader for the third time in as many rounds.

A total of eight losers at one and a journey now tough roads going to this tropical island paradise shooting eight total shot under the field, as scoring scores showed.

"I was nervous, and hot, the weather's conditioning program that I have taken up," said Casas in Filipino. "But not saying that this will be an advantage here, but it's good to be in a group as hidden this."

Casas was referring to a two-hour daily conditioning routine he started three months ago that includes football and cardiovascular exercises. He said he learned exercises from the local trainer who does the same.

That's why most of those in the 40 years old enabled take advantage of the short [illegible] and Alva Nature Golf Club, home complained of slowness and others of injuries due to the rough, island hopping fairways—the very venues of the PS tour four tournaments.

Casas posted seven five birdies against two bogeys, using his awesome length off the tee to post a six-under 210 total after 54 holes in three matches and take a two-shot lead over Ruben Gandil.

Gandil, the second round leader, had a double bogey-5-on No. 18 after overshooting a 40-yard second shot. He wound up with a level 71.

Carlos Villanueva was probably the biggest victim of the airborne, scoring a 6-on the par-5 14th to throw away a first 34 in the front side and finish with a 75. From second place, par was back before the six-eight-tipping journey from Lipa City. Villanueva is now down in fifth with a 214 total.

Antonio Lascuña also moved up the leaderboard, his 70 proving best in third spot, just three adrift.

Mike Perez shot the worst of the day a 77 [illegible] with seven birdies and two bogeys. He jumped to sole fourth from a tie for 12th at 214, one ahead of Villanueva and two up on Robert Pantoja and journeyman Edwin Escueta.

Pantoja carded a 73, while Escueta had five birdies and a double in his 69 to tie an third-off Casas.

GMA Casas ogles putt on the fourth hole of the Fairways and Bluewater course

GMA wants NBN telecast of Olympics

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MALACAÑANG Malacañang Arroyo wants to know whether Filipino sportsfans can still watch the Athens Olympics on local television.

The Chief Executive yesterday instructed Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri to find out if the government station NBN-4 can still pull off a coverage arrangement for the Games despite the collapse of the network's talks with the International Olympic Committee.

Neri said he will talk to NBN-4 executive Mia Cuaso today to determine if the station—which reportedly owns the VHF-ULF rights from previous TV coverage rights—can buy footages of selected sports.

Filipino athletes will see action only in athletics, archery, boxing, shooting, swimming and taekwondo. The Philippine team hopes to get forty-well in boxing and taekwondo.

"Mr. Secretary knows the importance of giving Filipinos the chance to watch their countrymen compete in Athens," said Arroyo. "It will be an injustice if we can't show the Games even in the confines of our homes."

The action, who is also a famous sports entertainment, said he will also raise the TV rights issue before the Philippine Olympic Committee general assembly today.

Arroyo said that NBN-4 crews at least telecast the opening and closing ceremonies as well as the highlights of the six events where Filipino athletes are entered.

INQUIRER

OPINION

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'Walk the talk'

IF President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address proved anything, it was only that there is no such thing as a perfect Sona—or at least none that will please everyone. Opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara said that with "the people's feelings" already "dampened" by so many problems, Ms. Arroyo should have delivered an "inspirational" speech. Administration Sen. Juker Angara held an opposite view, dismissing the speech as "long on rhetoric, short on substance."

EDITORIAL

Obviously even the best words and deeds would have found it difficult to reconcile the two objectives and satisfy both critics. As for the rest of us, it should be enough that Ms. Arroyo has laid down the roadmap of what she intends to accomplish not only in the coming year but by the end of her term.

The President defined the key objectives of her administration as "putting our economic house in working order" and refurbishing the bureaucracy. After saying Angelo de la Cruz, she said, "we must tailor the army we have already to improve our government and save our economy."

To achieve these objectives, the President unveiled a five-point "reform package" that seeks to create up to 10 million jobs, attract foreign investments, fight corruption, improve education and make the country less dependent on foreign energy. Going down to specifics, Ms. Arroyo said she would retool the government into a "lean and smart" machine by cracking down on corruption and downsizing the bureaucracy. Redundant offices would be abolished and excess manpower would be retired and encouraged to engage in business.

In the effort to "save the economy," the President said her administration would focus on raising the runaway budget deficit which she described as "our most urgent problem." She stressed that a widening deficit could drive away investments, slow down the creation of new job opportunities and limit the government's ability to provide needed infrastructure. To narrow the deficit, she asked businessmen to "adopt an attitude of tax compliance" and urged Congress to pass eight new tax measures that are estimated to raise P80 billion a year.

Undoubtedly Ms Arroyo has a firm grasp of the most urgent problems facing the nation, a clear idea of the direction it should take and some specific plans on how to get there. Obviously, some of her proposals need to be studied and refined. Some probably have to be discarded outright. But her ill-advised plan to scrap the value-added tax, which most other countries are now using.

But still the all-important question is whether she would "walk the talk," as businessman Raul Concepcion put it. Before she preaches the virtue of toughness, Ms Arroyo herself should demonstrate that she can be tough herself. Barely a month into her term, Ms Arroyo has still to show the kind of moral toughness the nation needs. Instead, she has easily succumbed to the temptation to bend and appease those who helped her happen in the last elections. While she talks about trimming the fat in the bureaucracy, she has been creating new Cabinet positions like that of presidential adviser for jobs creation to placate Lito Lorenzo whom she booted out of the Department of Agriculture despite doing a good job. While she promises to abolish 50 agencies under the Office of the President in addition to some 60 other offices already abolished, she plans to create a couple of new offices to handle the job of handing out government information, although every department and agency has already an information arm.

However, her real test will come when she presses Congress to pass new tax measures. The Senate, in particular, seems to be averse to imposing new taxes. Even administration senators have vowed to sit on Ms Arroyo's new tax proposals, saying the tax administration must first show that it can collect existing taxes more effectively.

Besides, all the President's calls for less waste and more efficiency in the use of government resources and all her threats of cracking down on corruption will ring hollow for as long as she allows the senators and congressmen to keep their multibillion-peso pork barrel. Next to "fantasy cops" but worse than them because of the huge sums involved, the projects funded by the pork barrel are the most visible symbols of corruption in government. So long as the pork barrel exists, any cost-saving campaign and any anti-corruption drive will be meaningless, and any new tax measure will be an undue imposition on the people.

Sona proposals are no good

AS I SEE IT

Amad H. Cruz

THERE are three important points that President Macapagal-Arroyo said in her State of the Nation address last Monday:

1. As expected, using Angelo de la Cruz to gain pogi points, she announced that it is the policy of her administration to avoid the welfare of overseas Filipino workers (OFW) above everything else.

2. Her administration will raise existing taxes and impose new ones to raise much needed revenues.

3. She wants Congress to vote the bill calling on Charter changes next year. This call was the most applauded part of her speech by congressmen. Naturally, Charter changers and a rally to the parliamentary system of government will benefit them.

Let's discuss them one by one:

1. The is not true. Maybe this is the policy now, but it was not before the De la Cruz case. If it was, why did the hostage so quit our demands to withdraw our small force? Had the hostage not been rescued, the Angelo de la Cruz would be headless now.

It was not policy but the very strong stance among our countrymen to save De la Cruz that forced her to withdraw our small force.

Had she not done that, and the hapless truck driver was beheaded, the anger of the Filipinos would have been so great that she could have been toppled. In contrast, the president was really not so much to save De la Cruz as to save herself.

2. Senators Franklin Drilon and Freddie Lorenzo are right. Before Congress raises taxes and imposes new ones, there must be an honest and strong effort by the government to collect existing taxes and to curb fraud.

Why can't the people smart and inspire voters when they see that many are getting away with not paying theirs? That while they pay to only useless by the tax collectors themselves? And that whatever is left is squandered in over-spending and pampering politicians and other perks for public officials?

People will not be happy to pay taxes until the Bureau of Internal Revenue employees, who depended the taxes in their own funds as the essential practice of providing public officials with vehicles as emergency expense will save billions more. And by telling them it already bought, the government will save more overtime.

The immediate spoke of "reforms" is cash exemptions. The most important reform the can do is not abolish the pork barrel system but the biggest source of corruption. Any half of the budget of public works projects actually goes to the projects. The rather half goes into the pockets of members of Congress and other public officials. Abolish the pork and we will save billions of pesos.

3. Amending the Constitution will cost the taxpayers billions of pesos, an amount we cannot afford now. Changing the Charter is unnecessary; we can wait until we can afford it. And a new Charter will not solve our problems. What we need is a new breed of public officials, not a new Charter.

Besides, we shift to a parliamentary system but leave the same politicians and public officials, we still have the same problems. Worse, the problems will worsen because our corruption will worsen. There will be no checks and balances between the three branches of government. The legislature will also control the executive branch and even the judiciary. The members of parliament (MPs)—who, most likely, will be the same congressmen we have now—will also be the Cabinet members. And there is no way we can stop them from controlling the judiciary. The chief executive will be an MP who can bribe enough number of his fellow MPs into voting for him to retain interest. Can you imagine what this called can do?

We have had good governments under the presidencies of Ramon Magsaysay, the time of President Manuel Quezon and President Sergio Osmeña and the present generation of politicians came to power. But because we have many problems now, these politicians want to solve them by the use of the parliamentary system. But this law is not the system, it is the people.

What can we do? Were the new Charter a panacea so as for ratification, let us all vote against it.

The world (record) according to Jay Leno

COMMENTARY

Robert Francis Garcia

THE NO. 1 talk show host in the United States drew a significant portion in our government's response to the Angelo de la Cruz crisis. A new world record was set on the 500-meter dash, he said—by Filipino troops fleeing Iraq.

I did not watch this episode, so I do not know how the audience reacted. As to me, I am normally a sucker for cynic sounds and wicked wisecracks—even politically incorrect ones—but this one did not particularly hit my funny bone.

But a lot succeeded in provoking a response. I would not be pure enough, and do a reporter about how the troops actually hit the finish line first by sacking out their shin. I will be accused of being a Trekkie. Then, my response would be to walk the shin that he Lenos made was an unseeing compliment—one that is, on the other hand, underserved.

Many other members of the "audience of the world" (my away from Jay Leno, because of which is the limit. The limit is, our country should not have found itself in the mess that was found but it not become quick in choosing its supporters this international race and leaving our troops spines into the game. How much worse, one agrees, does the world would be a much safer arena if America, the United Kingdom and America itself followed our lead and ran out of Iraq as quickly as they have in.

More than two weeks ago, while on a brief US trip, I took the most plebeian mode of travel from San Francisco to Seattle: the Greyhound bus, where one gets to share room with the most interesting (and sometimes chilling) of characters. There are with a US Army recruiter looking impatient and dazed, and unlike those Filipino Vietnam veterans who either are in shin, he opened a conversation, and told me how his application days dating off on the bus, for he did not have the luxury of a normal sleep during his eight months in Iraq. They were mortar-fired every day, and his friends dropped like chickens in front of his eyes. He also got to first hit M-16 every once and three and his a few rounds bullets. Understandably the whole experience was a complete reverse for him and his family, though he probably never realized how tough managed to sleep in those days as well, and how they left where their friends, sons and daughters perished in trucks like cattle being dumped.

I asked him when he thought of the war, and he said, matter-of-factly, that he thinks Osama bin Laden and George W. Bush should battle to bargain. "One is ugly, man," he said, images of explosions, blood and shrieks suddenly flashed in my head. Also I replied: "Or, I'd say, "The shell-shocked anonymous trooper characterized me in the eye and said: "Frankly, there is no concentrate force in the world that would even make me go back there again."

That is the randomly met, average American soldier for you, Jackie Leno.

But is a wave of sentiment rolling all over the land of the free and the home of the brave? I have not seen Michael Moore's film "Fahrenheit 9/11" or read Bill Clinton's "My Life," but I have seen how people within and outside America flock to those exploits: men wear pants in droves, I have seen the Mea Culpa photos and the goofy Mark Berg video and I noticed that the new revolution I read against the vicious cycle and hot was altogether is now getting universally denied.

Many Philippine government officials were afraid of negativity in Lenos's wisecrack, saying it is unfair to cite this one out of the one crowded. I agree. We can say a lot of things about our military, but it is definitely not lacking in courage. On the contrary, we probably suffer from our military men having too much of it. The same goes for their adversaries. Iraq biggest problems are not the lack of courage, but the lack of common sense on its part. If soldiers and rebels can be even a little less brave, perhaps they will have accomplished together before pulling the trigger. Perhaps, there would be less fighting, less bombings, less assassinations, less violence. Less bravadoes and less willingness to go to the battlefield are the thing doctors to partake in wars decided and designed in the comfort and security of sanctioned rooms, by "disasters" leaders within and outside of government.

Seriously, war-mongers, a little more of courage can be a good thing. It may be a less glorious path to power, but our blessings are on less and for between, let us just try and see for it.

Robert Francis Garcia is the chair of Peace Advocates for Truth, Justice and Healing (PATH) and co-convener of Initiatives of the Democratic Opposition (IDO).

Biting the bullet

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

[illegible] of an ilustrado frontline, President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address is a package of bad news that promises more pain than hope.

Unlike her three previous State...but Monday's [illegible] chose a sprawling vision. By contrast, it offered a prescription of tough decisions that are critically needed to avert a financial disaster posed by the country's budget deficit.

In each of the previous speech before Congress on how to govern, the President sounded the call for the nation to "bite the bullet, as she unveiled a package of right-aspect tax measures seeking to generate at least P60 billion in new revenue and for administrative reforms that would bring P22 billion in savings for the government. The speech instigated a debate on how to do it, but it can be said that she did not give simple warning before delivering the bitter dose of shock therapy.

The eight measures, designed to take the deficit in stand, make up the hard core of the State. The measures, together with the five-point anti-corruption drive, are intended to be the prime programs on which she will base her campaign for votes in the May 10 elections.

Three programs are: Value-added tax (VAT), to cut the windfall profits of telecommunications companies; to increase revenues from excise taxes on alcohol, tobacco products and petroleum products; to cut down the tax evasion; to curtail corruption; to install a targeted tax amnesty system, and to offer a performance-driven system for revenue agencies. Some of these measures stifled and caused nightmares in the business community and were shelved for the future last year.

The President said, "you cannot solve a problem in the budget deficit." With the urgent tax measures, the President expects not only to close the widening deficit and to derive revenue to finance her ambitious, ill-point agenda which seeks to create 10 million jobs in six years, reduce poverty, improve the quality of education, protect the environment and spur economic growth. Without a broader revenue base and a more effective revenue collection machinery, the 13-point agenda becomes a pie in the sky. The key to the success of the new Arroyo administration is not the 13-point agenda but the new revenue measures.

The call to bite the bullet was not addressed to businessmen alone. It was also addressed to Congress and to lawmakers, from whom political will is required to push reform legislation. The members of Congress were very remiss in passing the reform packages that had reflected to the longed-for pleasure the President got when she asked Congress to consider the package of reform measures, including the shift to a parliamentary system. It was not up to the congressmen's court, but it betrayed their reluctance to tackle the hard issues of more taxes and to raise the hated sin taxes. This is the government revenues of tough times.

On the table, the President's political will to push tough reforms. She goes to Congress this year with a free things going for her and with her standing on firmer grounds than where she was during the past three years. She has an electoral mandate and a broader and deeper legitimacy base. Her coalition with conservative majorities in both houses of Congress. This would allow her to pass reform legislations, allowing her no excuse if they are stagged in Congress. At least half the eight measures are targeted for inclusion this year.

Last year, she delivered the State...[illegible] through the [illegible] battles and [illegible] period of political uncertainty and instability. This year, she rode on the groundswell of public opinion supporting her decision to withdraw the [illegible] troops from Iraq to save the life of Filipino hostage Angelo de la Cruz, although this foreign policy decision provoked a strong backlash from the United States and other members of the coalition of the willing. It paid political dividends in the pull-out[illegible] of Filipino public opinion behind a government policy—a rare occurrence in Philippine domestic politics.

With this enhanced political capital, the President can draw on political resources that she can use to push unpopular measures such as tax reforms. The perception of hard medicine may be seen as a move to strengthen the country from a possible economic squeeze by the United States as retaliation for the withdrawal of the Philippine humanitarian mission from Iraq, as demanded by the Bush administration. The Bush administration has made astonishing pressure on making the Philippine pay for its breaking ranks with its allies on Iraq.

The American ambassador, Ernest Bower-done, has returned to Washington for consultations to "review" Philippine-American relations following the hostage drama—after Bush made disturbance in these relations since the eruption of the American military bases in 1991. "Review" in diplomatic parlance is a euphemism for retaliation.

Strengthening the deficit issue is one way for the President to blame the fall-out from the Iraq expenses. The Philippines has to pay for boosting the coalition's credibility. While it sacrificed the Filipino and broadened the government's political base, the De la Cruz dispute cut off the last line of Dyadem Arroyo in President Bush. Until a month, she could call Bush for help to iron out domestic problems, as she did during the election to ask him to influence international institutions from downgrading the sovereign ratings of the Philippines. She can't ask Bush to do that anymore. That's why we have to bite the bullet. That is the message of the President's tough prescription. This is the Dyadem hostage-taking.

The First Europe

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

Last [illegible] 800, nothing to unused alliance between the Roman papacy and the Carolingian empire of Charlemagne, who had the most effective united forces in Europe at the time.

After a few more battles on the outskirts, as it [illegible] entered as a medieval town in Germany called Aachen, known for its mineral hot springs. Charlemagne made Aachen the capital of his empire and had a palace built here in 796. Today it still stands at full splendor with the basilica adorned with gold and silver and its columns made of marble imported from Rome and Ravenna.

It is one of the chapels in the famous throne of Charlemagne, who was described by his biographer Einhard as a fat corpulent and quite tall, to the 19th century. Charlemagne's bones were removed for the first time and the "sarcophagus" believed his height reached 6 feet 4 inches. Philippine royals were often ahead of him and his good reasons.

Like all dynasties and empires in history, Charlemagne had a lot of blood in his hands. He eventually brought the tribes of united Europe under his control mainly through wars. In 774, he annexed Lombardy in Italy and ruled it for the next forty-eight years later, at the height of his power, he ordered the beheading of 4,500 Saxons who refused to capitulate. "The Saxons like all the tribes of Germany," Einhard writes, "were inferior people given to the worship of the devils and hostile to our religion." They were called "pagans." Charlemagne cherished Christian traditions and believed he was anointed by God. The Saxon war lasted for 33 successive years. He also waged wars against the Bretons, Bavars, Slavs and the Huns. He was crowned with extraordinary imperial and celebrating foreign peoples.

The most intriguing section of the palace was called "Treasury of Aachen Cathedral," the largest north of the Alps, details in text and exhibit, it not only Charlemagne's crown but also his mummy. The "new reliquary" contains the bones of Charlemagne's right forearm, which was reportedly stolen by a French king. It's a [illegible] details. His tomb was opened in 1165 when Charlemagne was canonized.

His family was no even more interesting. He had five wives and 4 stolen children, of whom nine were with his third wife Hildegarde between 758 and 783. His first child with his first wife Himiltrude was illegitimate. Pippin the Hunchback, Charlemagne apparently abandoned his second wife Ansiltrudis. And with his fourth wife Fastrada and fifth wife Luitgard, he had two more children.

You'd think the research on his personal life ends there. Wrong. There's also a listing of his illegitimate children, those born outside his marriage, and the commonly accepted version by the sun dial, Charlemagne did not want to see an unfortunate son as love as an heir to the throne.

So, who became emperor after Charlemagne? When he died in 814, his empire was divided among his three sons, Pippin the Hunchback, Karl or Charles and Pippin themselves died, Louis the Pious was crowned emperor.

Ingrid and I could have gone on as there was a great deal more we haven't seen in the huge complex of "Charlemagne." But it was time to go back to the Netherlands and after grabbing lunch at sandwiches, Ingrid happily bought a book to the autobahn, info what has become the United States of Europe in this modern age.

On summer vacation, University of Hawaii professor Belinda A. Aquino is coming in [illegible] next.

Muslim time and rituals

COMMENTARY

Abraham P. Sakili, Ph.D.

NABIL Harper's article, "Some information on the Muslims" (PDI, 7/17/04), rises some questions about the Islamic concepts of the Eid'l Adha ceremonies about the Sala Muslims. This writer, who is born Isla, Isla, appreciate Harper's eagerness to include Islam as a subject in the Philippine educational curriculum. But some corrections are in order.

First, all Muslims do not use the adjective "Mohammedan" as replacement for "Muslim" or "Islamic." Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him!) is neither worshipped by the Muslims as God nor is he regarded as the founder of Islam. To the Muslims, Muhammad was a prophet of God, such as Divine character, though he had in the long line of God's messengers. The label "Muhammedan" or "Mohammedanism" is a distortion and is not to be used or observed.

Secondly, the details of Muslim time reckoning through its Hijrah calendar and the accompanying rituals, such as the sighting of the crescent moon, are not clearly explained by the writer in the three paragraphs devoted to the subject. The Hijrah calendar is lunar and it started from the Hijra or "Flight" of Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Medina in 622 A.D. to avoid the persecution of the Quraysh tribe. The Hijrah calendar is composed of 12 months of 29 or 30 days, with about 29 and a half days for each of the 12 months starting from Muharram (and "Muharram" as quoted by Harper from Ocean's text) and ending in Zul-Hijj, which is the 12th month when the annual pilgrimage is held in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The month of Ramadhan is the Muslim month for fasting (sawm in Arabic or saum in Tausug). The dates of Muslim significant events, like that of Muslim's birth (prophet's birthday), as the third month of Rabbial Awwal, varies when viewed from the Gregorian calendar, mostly because of the difference of about 11 days between the Hijrah and Gregorian years.

Why don't the Muslims rely solely on the clock as their time reference? As basis for solving the feeling in the month of Ramadhan, the Muslims do not refer to the precise calculation on the clock. Instead they struggle to watch for the appearance of the first crescent moon to begin fasting. What does this imply? The Muslim sense of time differs from the Western sense of time, which either can be used to manage daily activities. The Muslim sense of time, inspired by the natural days flow is moderate, contemplative, not many business, among others. Obvious time is considered "rigid," "precise" and "mechanical" —upsetting up almost universally.

On the last point in Harper's article where he raised hope for the so-called "assimilation" of the Muslims into the Philippine national body system, it should be emphasized that the Muslims in the Philippines as well as in other countries, regard "assimilation" as an "enemy" to be resisted to the degree. It is neither in the Christian Filipinos have the so-called "Muslim problem" as the southern Philippines, the Muslims of the south have also their "Christian problem." "Assimilation," if not dealt with accordingly, could mean disaster. It is not the same as "integration" in the sense that the Muslim parties their struggle to build themselves from "assimilation" as they strive for self-determination to conserve and develop their way of life in accordance with the norms and practices prescribed to objective Islam.

It is hoped that the U.S. elections signal for the Philippine government to alter the unitary structure of its "unitarianism" system of government vis-à-vis the Muslims, instead of pursuing its currently directed so-called "Strong Republic." Otherwise, the government should undertake a political system which may be appropriate to the multi-ethnic Mindanao.

Abraham P. Sakili, Ph.D. is associate professor of political science and dean of Studies, College of Arts and Letters, University of the Philippines in Diliman

Intelligence and lack of imagination

[illegible] writer is [illegible] "policy management, capability and, most of all, imagination." That was the gist of a report coming from a US government commission that looked into the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attack.

Contrary to claims of the Bush administration, there had been repeated intelligence from various government agencies about an impending terrorist attack from Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network, especially after the first bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993. But the lack of coordination in the activities of intelligence agencies, such as the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, failed to prevent the attacks.

PINOY KASI

Richard J. Xu

For example, as late as 1997, the CIA's Counterterrorism Center was still describing Bin Laden as "a financier of terrorism" rather than as a terrorist leader. It came out now that he did not have even much funds at his disposal but had been able to establish a base, but lethal network of operatives.

The report said that one of the most serious failures was one revealed during the 9/11 Commission inquiry, considering that in the last year or so, other US government agencies have released very disturbing reports indicating that there were serious flaws in the arguments used by the Bush administration to invade Iraq. We now know that the Iraq that we and Saddam Hussein pretended did not have "weapons of mass destruction." It has not been shown that Saddam was part of the al-Qaida network, or that he had close links with them.

Yet, the Philippine government unfold many other countries with our defense of Bush and the invasion of Iraq—by our rarely reconsidered into the "coalition of the willing" and our deployment of troops there. It was a decision we now realize all too quickly we received our stand after regards de la Cruz was taken hostage, leaving the world wondering whether Filipino soldiers were trained.

I will return to that point of Cruz later in my article. My point is that we were too quick to believe Bush, and thus have now suffer the consequences. Previous US intelligence from fear is blamed a "failure of intelligence" on the part of US government agencies, and this is why the Bush administration is now determined to Iraq.

Which reminds me of how, in our last elections, we all seemed so concerned about "intelligence" among our presidential candidates, forgetting the kind of intelligence that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo—perhaps because she had a doctorate in economics—had the intelligence that Fernando Poe Jr. lacked.

But we have to consider how anyone of average intelligence would be blindly believe Bush, whose core lack of intelligence has become the issue of jokes in the American mass media.

Now the 9/11 Commission's report raises another interesting point about leadership: the need not just for "intelligence" but also for imagination. It's an interesting word—in Tagalog, guro guro—that is to be associated only to innocent and the young. In the dictionary, it is the English "imagination" has a very different meaning—it's considered as reality, but being able to see beyond that reality.

Good example, he example, Jaguar will an eye for what's around us, as well as the curiosity to imagine, and explore, the possibilities beyond what we see. It's not surprising that Albert Einstein, Isaac Newton, Leonardo Da Vinci, "imagination is more important than knowledge." A person can be knowledgeable but, if he or she is caught with the know and none, lacking the imagination to look at issues of what's possible, then at best, you can only expect mediocrity from him.

Worse is when an entire people, like Bush, take over the reins of power, especially in the most powerful country in the world. The simplistic division of the world into good ("us") and evil ("them, the Iraqis, the arabs") has made the world ever more unsafe and vulnerable to terrorism. The 9/11 Commission warns that another terrorist attack of greater magnitude is not beyond the realm of possibility.

Note that the 9/11 Commission found that the US intelligence agencies I'm beginning to speak, using that word "intelligence") were not able to warn quite that 9/11 attack because, ironically, they were flooded with information. For example, they were getting a deluge of information gathered from the Internet, which—and this is quite worrying to all of us "non-intelligence" mortals—cannot yet to be controlled.

The US intelligence groups also relied heavily on Iraqi exiles who exaggerated Saddam's capabilities he were desperate to convince the United States to invade. The motives of these exiles were to see the US government destroyed that to have themselves catapulted into power, once Saddam was gone.

But the point of the 9/11 Commission was that US government officials were trapped by the new mass media environment of round-the-clock news, demanding more and more of "instant intelligence" rather than more in the search of "true intelligence" rather than more in the search of "true intelligence" rather than more in the search of "true

Iraq's and the Philippines' shared experience

LETTERS

THE FILIPINO truck driver's ordeal by Iraqi insurgents mirrored up a Philippine past now shared by Iraq. Both countries have come face to face with America's foreign policy of installing democracy and self-governance by force and suppression. The United States keeps on being about self-rule in Iraq but not without use and bloodshed.

The same thing happened more than 100 years ago during the Philippine-American war of 1899-1902. 4 million or so Filipinos had to die in that war before self-rule could be brought to the archipelago. In this sense, Iraq is what the Philippines once was.

The collision of the Filipino truck driver and the Iraqi insurgents crisscrosses analogous histories—one...almost forgotten, the other just beginning.

Like other Third World countries, which were divided into colonies by world powers, the Philippines—a colony of Spain, then of the United States—is a very poor nation, its biggest export being human labor. There are more than seven million Filipinos working and banking a living outside their country. They are called overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), about half of whom are in the Middle East.

In when Filipino truck driver, Angelito de Ocio was snatched by Iraqi insurgents near Fallujah on July 7, he became the unsuspecting symbol of the OFW making rich and faith and loneliness to feed the family. Fact Persistent Mangagal. Arroyo made a sacrificial lamb out of De la Cruz, she would have joined the gallery of Filipino martyrs who placed the Filipino people's interest second to that of the Americans.

—LAS MEDIANILLA, (lorenzodelvi@hotmail.com)

The cruelty of poverty

EVERY the federal employment opportunities in the country are a few Filipinos like despite she's fled, have been forced to leave the country and seek for one thing: where. In their words, it is "something they have to do." Rather than die (and with them, their families) of starvation here, they've chosen to go to some far-off land to fight a mother's fight, risking life in the face of danger, pain and loneliness, just to feed loved ones on line.

But sometimes luck really runs out for some unfathomable reason. What happened to De la Cruz is a classic case: someone struggling to keep his family alive in distant lines a conflict that threatens to take away his very own life and the welfare of his family.

He can easily blame a number of people—the US president, the terrorists, President Macapagal-Arroyo, and engage in endless debates on whether he felt sure that much needs the pullout of our contingent from Iraq. But for me, it boils down to one thing. De la Cruz was supposed to be there, but he had to. That's how cruel poverty is.

—KEITH MARTINEZ, (keithdc25@yahoo.com)

Winning the war against corruption

THERE is one reaction to the new three-page news item: PDA, 7/19/04) titled "Bishops, leaders tapped to join anti-corruption," by Abbie Lalog-Lavellana and Yvonne Chua, page also guilty of graft, acts guilt" Or "Sin from Outdoor.

Our ministers, consisting of many esteemed lawyers who have been fighting for meaningful moral changes since the Marcos era, all the opinion) but without the following, the war against graft and corruption will surely fail as in the past.

1. A fully funded and autonomous Ombudsman's Office, manned by truly competent and independent body of non-political appointees who are right-wrong, courageous and competent.

2. A lifestyle check on the rank and employees of the Office of the Ombudsman to unmask the "rotten apples in the basket."

3. The filing of herborne preceedings and preliminary attachment of unexplained wealth and financial proceeds to prevent the guilties and their cohorts from "buying" their acquittal and hiring "smart" lawyers.

4. The speedy and just investigation by the Ombudsman of graft and corruption cases. We know for a fact that many cases in the office drag unresolved for several years, thus discouraging concerned citizens from filing graft cases.

5. A lifestyle check on family members, justices and employees, as in the Ombudsman, many cases in that court, like the case against Imelda Marcos, drag for years; and only the small fries are convicted.

6. The publication in prominent dailies, like the Inquirer, of the pictures of grafters convicted by final judgments.

The war against graft and corruption is a fight that needs all the resources the government and the people can muster. Without it, we must note this sad because it robs our people in poverty and causes political destabilization.

—FRED ENO L. SILTRAN JR., president, Nagmamalasakit na mga Manunuggul sa mga Mangguguwang Pilipino Inc., #126-A Visayas Ave Ext., Sampaloc, Manila

Land use code a must

TYPHOON (you tell at least 20 people dead and some P100 million in damages. Once again, are screamed people. Scenes and pictures of livelihood being eroded by landslides, overflowing rivers and flash floods. While the efforts of the President to provide assistance and comfort are welcome, much more needs to be done.

Preventive rather than curative measures must be put in place. Floods, erosion and landslides are largely caused by the irresponsible use of our natural resources. For example, prime agricultural lands are being preserved for subdivision and development. Using a land use code will at least ensure that contributors to soil erosion, making us vulnerable to flooding. In the wake of typhoon Ignoy, rampant illegal logging activities in Baggao, Cagayan paid by the province of Isiah Catalano have been pinpointed as the main cause of the flash floods.

A major factor in our ecosystem are of land is our lack of a national land use code. Since the 8th Congress, civil society and reform advocates in government have been pushing for the enactment of a national land use law. This legislation will institutionalize the distribution and utilization of land resources—determining what lands are for what purpose—to ensure their sustainability and development. Using a people-centered approach, this policy will consolidate our economy's fragmented land use policies. Unfortunately, after four congresses and hundreds of explanations, our haven't are passed this important law. But it is not too late. We cannot permit typhoons from hitting us, but we can limit their adverse effects. Hence, before another costly storm—our country no urge the President to certify as priority measure this crucial reform legislation.

—DAVID C. CANCIO, Kabalikat ng Lungsod para sa Kaunlarang Pangkapaligiran, 1 Mahabagin St., Teachers' Village, Diliman, Quezon City

Honest Filipino

I WAS deeply touched upon reading "Cash-starved Pinoy returns $63K most human cabbie," (PDI, 7/18/04) Owen again, 93 gance have shown their natural kind of humanity not only in their homeland but also in other shores.

Jaime Salgado, a cabbie driver earning about $80 a day in New York, could have stashed the purse worth $30,000 left by his passenger in his cab. But a God-fearing man, he thought otherwise and instead sought for the owner, Lawrence Delicante, in Connecticut and returned to the woman. Feliciano said of him, "Jaime, you're the winner," and gave him $1000. (PDI, 7/18/04) Once again, 93 gance have shown their natural kind of humanity not only in their homeland but also in other shores.

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Jaime Salgado, we are proud of you. God bless you and your family. May your tribe increase.

—GEORGE O. PETILLA SR., 27 Hood Street, Barangay Commonwealth, 1121 Quezon City (Greater Lisa Area)

World record in 100-meter dash

AT Lutz, an American television comedian crying at his funny stuff. "A new world record has been set in the 100-meter dash. It was set by (Filipino) swimmer Rowdy Gaudoy."

There's a better world record in store for my fellow countrymen: stopping their Iraq oil.

American troops were recently accused by the International Atomic Energy Monitoring Team (IAEMT) of smuggling millions of Iraq and funneling billions of dollars to American firms such as the infamous Halliburton, a spectacle to massive war logistics. Even Iraqi Governing Council Secretary Nouri McClellan said, "There is no supervision with nuclear materials."

Thus, but why did the United States use extreme pressure on the leader of a small country to fight its battle? Why? Because it was really nothing to conscience people goodwill?

Yes, the United States has been forcing many small nations to join the coalition of the willing not because it really needs their help in waging the Iraq war but only because it wants to project the image of Iraq as an international undertaking. And the United States has bullied a good number of these small nations into sending contingents to Iraq by threatening withdrawn American investments, trade privileges and much-needed loans.

As everybody knows, the American troops invaded Iraq not because they are after weapons of mass destruction, but because they are after precious oil. So, dear Lutz, have any joke for America to stop being a hypocrite, and quit supplying us small nations?

—RUDOLF LOPEZ, marudol@eduamail.com.ph

Is anybody listening out there?

HIGH BLOOD

Manny Carvajal

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the nonconnecting and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit down and scratch themselves —Ed.

Why else would our national pride be eroding so drastically how such that some people would rather they were not Filipinos?

Take politicians are blankenvelope all: let the people swallow in poverty, desperation and hopelessness. Let them not know what they deserve. Keep them up to the air, confused and groaning. It is easier to manipulate them that way!

DC. So-thirtie. I'm a grouch. But when does "bright boys"—without the least bit of consideration or compassion for their countrymen—suggest to add another school unit to improve the quality of our graduates, or to introduce a new tax to help solve our budget deficit; or form a commission for value formation, boy you can call me the father of all grouches. Yes I don't think I'd like to just stand by and watch.

Something (What a mixture! Those aren't solutions. Those are excuses, ridiculously superficial palliatives that not only muddle the real issues; those are ingredients on the already economically, emotionally battered soul ... on the verge of being serious crisis or worse!

Somebody get us have enough brain to use. This contributes to soil erosion, making us vulnerable to flooding. In the wake of typhoon Ignoy, (alleged) illegal logging activities in Baggao, Cagayan paid by the province of Isiah Catalano have been pinpointed as the main cause of the flash floods.

A major factor in our ecosystem are of land is our lack of a national land use code. Since the 8th Congress, civil society and reform advocates in government have been pushing for the enactment of a national land use law. This legislation will institutionalize the distribution and utilization of land resources—determining what lands are for what purpose—to ensure their sustainability and development. Using a people-centered approach, this policy will consolidate our economy's fragmented land use policies. Unfortunately, after four congresses and hundreds of explanations, our haven't are passed this important law. But it is not too late. We cannot permit typhoons from hitting us, but we can limit their adverse effects. Hence, before another costly storm—our country no urge the President to certify as priority measure this crucial reform legislation.

—DAVID C. CANCIO, Kabalikat ng Lungsod para sa Kaunlarang Pangkapaligiran, 1 Mahabagin St., Teachers' Village, Diliman, Quezon City

New hopes for real independence

I WISH to congratulate President Macapagal-Arroyo for finally standing up to the demands of the United States and prioritizing the needs and lives of her countrymen.

I thank her for taking the withdrawal of ES political support as well as of ex-military and economic aid by pulling out our troops from Iraq to save the valuable life of Angelito de la Cruz. I thank her for not following the path of Bulgaria, which insists on fighting an unjust war. I thank her for giving Filipinos hope that the Philippines under her leadership will not be beholden to the United States and instead, act like a sovereign nation.

May this mark the beginning of a truly independent Philippine foreign policy.

—RAYMOND VINCENT S. SAMONTE, raymondvs@eduamail.com.ph

U SMASH TILT

La Salle shuttlers sweep FEU

LA SALLE teams, displaying impressive cohesion, swept the men's and women's divisions Saturday in the U Smash 2004 Interuniversity Badminton tournament.

The full-stocked squad shuttlers scored five flawless (3, 11-2, 11-2, 11-3, in the men's doubles, before sweeping the "formidable" women's pack, 11-0, 11-0.

Coach Caren Lagos constructed La Salle in the two doubles tournaments, while Allan de Leon handled FEU.

More than 300 players from over 20 universities participated in the U Smash competition.

Among the top university contenders were Technological Institute of the Philippines and Central Colleges of the Philippines, which both made it to the semifinal round.

U Smash was organized by AC Munich Communication Network and promoted by Liebherr Philippines. Other backers were Bacha Unlimited, New Era Consumer Partners Ltd., Campana Interest, Walker and Darlington Socks. The media partners were Aim 88.3 and the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Yabut, Villanueva make chess finals

LOYOLA CITY—Mark Yabut stormed top-seeds Jonathan Arevalo in the final round then topped rival rubers in the rubbers to win the junior division of the Southern Luzons leg of the Shell National Youth Active Chess Championships on the Old Loyola Inter Sunday.

Yabut swept his last three games and finished with 6.5 points, the same output of Ma. Bird Villanueva and Ramon Blanco-ag, who settled for a draw in the close of the two-day event according to the pre-distinctive leg of a five-stage series sponsored by Filipinas Shell.

Villanueva beat Mayeen-ag for second place on a superior tiebreak score to join Yabut in the finals of the annual seven-island leg. JP 2004 Performance at SM Megamall.

Both from medals, Yabut and Villanueva won P5,000 and P4,000, respectively.

The national finals will gather the qualifiers from five regional tournaments.

In the ladders category, Rambo Pascua trounced Bernard Aviles in the finals to pull off a seven-match sweep. Manuel Palmas took the second spot in the national finals.

Surging Altas chase 6th win

THE UNIVERSITY of Perpetual Help Altas have turned out to be this season's biggest surprise in the NCAA men's basketball tournament.

From tailenders last year, the Altas now shout for a first hold of the solo leadership when they wrap up their first-round campaign today against the Philippine Christian U Dolphins at the Rizal Coliseum.

Gametime is at 2 p.m.

The San Beda Red Lions and Lyceum Lancers square off in the other series encounter at 4 p.m.

"After three years of being together, our team has matured," said Perpetual coach Aric Cordoza, whose team recently shocked defending champions Letran Knights, 71-68.

Perpetual's only loss came a month ago, in their opening game against Jose Rizal.

The Las Pinas defenders will again rely on reigning topscorer Ben Asoro and sophomore Thirdyear Joe and Khel Rilas. The Dolphins will pit veteran Robert Suiry and second-year guard Jason Castro.

STANDINGS	W	L
Perpetual	5	1
Letran	4	2
Mapua	4	2
PCU	3	3
San Beda	2	3
JRC	1	4
St. Benilde	0	6

TODAY'S GAMES
(Rizal Coliseum)
4:00 p.m. — Perpetual vs PCU (p)
vs Mapua (fin)
6 p.m. — San Beda vs Letran (p)
vs Benilde (fin)

Mapua, fighting at 4 p.m. The Perpetual Altas clash with the PCU Baby Dolphins at 11:30 a.m.

The Cardinals, who recently defeated PCU, 90-85, will be led by the six-rebound duo of Elmher Cuevers and Erwin Sta. Maria.

The Lions, who just ended their three-game skid with an 84-80 win over JRU, Benilde, will bank on rusts subjects Jeff Bandoro, Arjun Cordero and rookie revelation Yousif Aljamal Jr.

Defending junior champs San Beda find Ueda go for a first round sweep when they meet the Lyceum Young Lancers at 4 p.m.

OLIVARIBA (right), who scores all PCU's (post) Acosmos (left) in a recent game, will again lead Mapua against San Beda.

SPORTSWATCH

Tyson in trouble if Williams extends fight, say pundits

TYSON: Old at 38?

GALESBURG main defense-fighting, most-dominant-gunfighter of his generation. Mike Tyson attempts to regain of his reputation when he fights Kevin Williams on July 30 (5 a.m., July 31 in Manila) in a comeback-type fight against "Iron" Mike Tyson.

Tyson knocked a record of 50-4 with 35 knockouts, had Williams a no-contender. The Englishman has a 37-3 record with 27 victories via knockout. Eight consecutive says age might be a factor in the match-and-fight, which will be aired exclusively in the Philippines by ABC-5. But veteran Tyson just turned 38, an age where most boxers have already called it quits. Williams, on the other hand, is still in his prime, and that should prove to be an advantage if the match, which takes place in Louisville, Kentucky, goes to the late rounds. Tyson has not fought since knocking out Clifford Etienne in the third round on April 9, 2003. Etienne had fight was the first for the 5-foot-10-inches undisputed heavyweight champion since losing to Lennox Lewis in June 2002. The 6-foot-2'/4"Williams fought two bouts in a 29-month span beginning in 2002. Last year, he lost to Vitali Klitschko and then beat Mikkel Kessler, who now TKOed in the fifth round. The Philippine broadcast will be anchored by Sonny Inocencio, Bunny Pascua and Banjo Gonzaga. Also scheduled to be there are Basketball's John Ali, daughter of boxing great Muhammad Ali.

SBC crushes Lourdes

IAN SEC dropped its Pasaporte Blu—members and will cling Saturday by crushing Lourdes School (Mandaluyong), 69-62, in the Blu MBT.

Pasaporte leader Ted Tocomsat at the St. Benedict College court in Antipolo City. La Salle Greenhills, Ateneo and Don Bosco Technical Institute showed up for the game but were unable to keep their second straight victories in the Pasaporte Division. CSAV spilled Lourdes School, 77-50. Don Bosco ripped Mapua Malayan Colleges, 78-45, and Ateneo subdued Immaculate Conception (IC), 81-51. Don Bosco's National College subdued Notre Dame of Greater Manila, 73-51, in the other Pasaporte contest. Junior Scholastic Ateneo attended to their second victory in the 2004 group. The Xavier Stallions dethroned St. Mary's College, 80-57, while Don Bosco annihilated Mapúa School, 90-71, in other CSAV games. Lourdes School (SEC) routed University of Luzon, 62-43. San Beda scored 60 to La Salle Zobel, 30-27, and Lourdes School (Mandaluyong) stopped Xavier (Nova Ostiza), 49-25.

'Batratan' sets 120 fights

THE PATRONAGE 4 Cards Derby concludes tonight without any fans. The 120 matches lined up at Bulacan Bilog-Bilog Park. The first fight is the Race No. 1 slated by Pagcor-Gold Phil-Luzon Circuit Inc. begins at 7 p.m. After 10 days of eliminations in 10 outfights in Bulacan, Cavite, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Quezon, Batangas, Laguna and Metro Manila, the field of 120 contenders has been whittled down to the most capable. Forty-nine gamecocks will battle each other tonight for the top four spots to be contested by Thursday's Race #10 for a P1-million cash award. A leadership pot for Pinoy Super Mandatory cases winners have made the list of contenders in Laguna's cockpit arena. Tonight's fight is the Race No. 10 held

Anthony guarantees gold medal by US 5

ANTHONY

JACKSONVILLE, Florida—Carmelo Anthony has a message for Argentina, Lithuania and the other best basketball teams from around the world: The United States is going to win at the Athens Games.

"We're guaranteeing a gold medal. We're bringing it back," Anthony boldly predicted Monday on his last day of practice with the US national team.

"That's just a young kid saying that," coach Larry Brown said when informed of Anthony's guarantee. "But as long as he respects the people we're playing against and understands how good they've got (there) then we have no problem with that."

• In Charlotte, North Carolina, Eraldo Oriabre, who left to the Charlotte Bobcats as the second overall pick in the draft, signed with the expansion team Monday.

Terms of the deal were not disclosed. Oriabre is a member of the UNOPasseur team.

• In Dallas, the Mavericks have turned to one of their former bosses for some ease in the middle, non-quitting coaches Cotton Booth Dean Oliver Donnie Nelson to fix the mixed Dennis Rodman on Monday.

AP

Mayorga tells Trinidad: Hit me

MIAMI—Macho promoting between Wiki Trinidad and Ricardo Mayorga began when Oleri fight was announced a month ago and it didn't let up at a joint news conference Monday.

Mayorga, wearing a business suit and ready with a glove, dared Trinidad to "hit him." Trinidad wouldn't hit but responded with fiery talk of inflicting punishment when they fight.

"This is not the place to fight you, besides it is not legal," Trinidad said. "But the advice I'm going to give your corner is to make sure they keep inside the ring as soon as possible when we do fight. You are going to get your bad beating and they should help you keep avoiding total knockout."

Their fight Oct. 2 in New York will be the first fight after a two-year retirement for the 31-year-old Trinidad, a former welterweight, junior-middleweight and middleweight champion.

AP

PBL forms star-studded team for Qatar tourney

TRINIDAD

WHILE in the middle of a three-month break, the Philippine Basketball League (PBL) has formed a star-studded selection that will represent the country in a tough international tournament scheduled to start on Aug. 5-12.

Commissioner Chino Trinidad said during yesterday's PBL Forum at the Manila Pavilion it will be the first time in about five years that a PBL selection will go out of the country for a multi-nation tournament.

"It's already a victory in itself for the PBL because being invited to this tournament means that the organizers believe in our program. That's why we're not passing up on this opportunity," said Trinidad.

The PBL chief said they received the invitation just last month, giving them little time to form the selection, which has been promising for three months now under Filipino coach Jimmy Mariano.

Trinidad said the team will next host an encounter for the tournament. Besides giving locals a chance to shine, an all-Filipino lineup will also do well with the large Filipino community in Qatar.

The players are Lonie Gotil, Wesley Pinder, Arnie Mendoza, Mel Rutaquio and God Gervacio of Cebu; Chester Tolentino, JP Reyes and Mario Delgacez of Welcoat; Mark Macapagal and Raoul Jocelin of Mapua; Ferdie Raquiza and Joseph Sobrevilla of Montalban; Aaron Dao of Tuyuan Gin-Lemon; and Jun Abrid of Hi-Tire.

Taguig outshines Stars

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Powered Taguig made a second 13 spike blockers as it finally ended its 4-match slump over the Stars Gas Cagayan de Oro Stars, 94-84, in the MBC Regional Basketball Conference's national championship at the Xavier University gym here.

Mayor Freddie Tinga's Taguig squad, which had five straight games over the week after sipping Cagayan Valley in the opener, jumped to a 29-17 lead to start the second set to the games.

Jay Villar paced Taguig with 19 points on a perfect 5-for-5 shooting from beyond the arc, but it was Opie Gonzalez who grabbed key plays to score with 16 points, four rebounds, four assists and two steals.

It was the fifth straight setback for the Stars in the tournament sponsored by Pentacore, Spring Cooking Oil, PCSO, Subjects Lotto, Hyatt's, Spring Mineral Water, Cebu Pacific, the Philippines, Superoil, Accel and Mobil.

The Asiatech Warriors of MBC president Mahamud Tan Buddhamad Gee Tuvera knows to stop the Baguio Cardinals' two-game winning run today when they clash at 5:30 p.m. at the MCU Complex in Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

The Cardinals, still grieving over the untimely death of star guard Wylie Arellano in a vehicular accident in Baguio recently, will also miss the services of Joel Bruce, who is still recuperating from a sprained left metatarsal.

Rotary fellowship golf swings to Cebu

THE ROTARY Golfing Fellowship Foundation of the Philippines (RGFPF) will hold its southern leg at the Cebu Country Club and Mactan Island Golf Course Club in Cebu City on Aug. 21-23.

Rotary Club of Cebu Port Center, led by president Georgie Meng, is co-host of the event, according to district Gov. RGFPF executive vice president-chief operating officer and past governor of Rotary Club Magsaysay-Los Baños.

"All nine par-3 holes on both golf courses will offer more than a million pesos in prizes," said tournament chair Reinerio Percy Bengo.

Participants will come from Baguio to Davao, and RGFPF chair Walter "Butch" Soliven and president-CEO Joel "Ito" Pick.

For inquiries in Luzon, call Rowena Bulalat and Arnel Abarrella of the RGFPF secretariat at 721-8896 and 721-8364 or fax 721-8896 and 721-5946.

Participants from Visayas and Mindanao may get in touch with Ms. Ivy Tayko Manalaysay Cruz, telefax no. 032-422-6764.

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Gargurevich

US naval might arrives for war games

By Allan Macatuno
Phil Central Luzon Desk

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Aboard four United States naval ships, at least 1,400 American sailors arrived here on Tuesday morning to participate in a new round of combined naval exercises with their Filipino counterparts.

Dubbed Cooperation Afloat Readiness Training (Cart) Exercise 2004, the week-long joint training is designed to enhance the capabilities of the two forces in conducted naval operations. It will involve 1,200 Filipino troops.

The US contingent arrived at 11 a.m. via American guided missile destroyers USS Russell and USS McCampbell, assault and support ship USS Tarawa and dock landing ship USS Fort Mac Henry.

The vessels also transported military materiel such as helicopters, highly mobile multipurpose vehicles and communications equipment that would be used during the exercises.

Military officials said the training would give the participants the opportunity to work together in planning scenarios in the field, at sea, and in civic action projects.

Rear Admiral Kevin Quinn, commander of the Logistics Group Western Pacific of the US Navy, said the exercise is "very valuable" as it gives both forces the chance to work "extensively."

"The US and Philippine forces have a long history of working and training together, and each time we do so, a new generation of US men and women benefit greatly from this valuable opportunity and interaction," Quinn said during the opening ceremony of the Cart 2004.

He said this year's training would use the Portable Afloat Command, Control and Communications Terminal (PACCT).

"It (PACCT) allows us to communicate securely and provides us an operational picture that can be used by our commanders at sea to maintain situational awareness of their units and tactical operations," Quinn said.

He said the US contingent would also introduce Filipino troops to the Combined Alarm post Regional Information Exchange (Combrix) system through a series of demonstrations.

Combrix is a global Internet protocol architecture that allows US forces to share information and operational planning with allies.

Both forces will share antiterrorism knowledge and conduct extensive force protection training exercises, he said.

"We are developing our maritime law enforcement skills with the expertise of Chief US Coast Guard. We conduct symposia on legal issues of mutual interest, such as the law of the sea, maritime interdiction operations and rules of engagement," Quinn said.

US soldiers say Muslims not targets

CAMARIN, North Cotabato—Muslims here will not be harmed by US soldiers who are here to conduct antiterrorism training for Philippine soldiers.

Take it from Filipino-American soldier Sgt. 1st Class Dante Garcia, who is part of the US contingent, who said the Americans did not come to the Philippines to fight the Muslims.

"I don't hate the Muslims. We don't hate the Muslims. We're here to train phase in Mindanao dominated by Muslims and there were no problems," said Garcia who also took part in the Balikatan exercises held in Basilan and Zamboanga.

Garcia's comments came in the height of speculations by some groups that Muslims will be the US soldiers' targets.

Camarin town used to be one of Moro Islamic Liberation Front's strongholds in Mindanao. Many MILF supporters or even guerrillas fortified *bar* in the villages surrounding Barangay Nasapian where the military's Camp Lucero is located.

Live fire

But Garcia said they were not anticipating a real gun fight, although live ammunition will be used during the exercises.

Said in Brigadier Gen. Antonio Mora people here, US and Philippine military officials dismissed talks about running after *MILF fighters* in the area although the exercise, called Ocean 04-03, is designed as a counterterrorism training.

Maj. Robert Bell, commander of the US contingent, also dismissed off speculations of a possibility of a gunfight with the MILF.

He said running after the MILF is beyond the focus of the exercises.

Col. Ingant Cardenia, commander of the 603rd Infantry Brigade, also said that while the US and Philippine government is committed to support their alliance against global terrorism and insurgency, chances of encounters with the MILF are slim.

This, he said, as all exercises will be held inside the 200-hectare military camp.

But said that in order to avoid clashes with the MILF and other armed groups in Camarin, the US soldiers will not be allowed to go out of the camp.

Except for the members of the humanitarian component of the exercises where some of the soldiers will be allowed to go out, the soldiers' time will be spent mostly inside the camp.

with reports from Philippine Star wire

Isabela mayoral row heating up

ISABELA, Isabela—Mayor Raymund Tapidel has asked the vice mayor here to stop performing the function of acting mayor while the leadership issue in the town has not been resolved by the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

Tapidel's appeal to Vice Mayor Mercedes Vizcarra came following the recent decision of the Comelec's second division annulling the mayor's proclamation amid charges of election fraud. The Comelec also ordered the execution of the municipal canvassing board.

Vizcarra, stepmother of former Mayor Bernie Vizcarra, has called on Tapidel to stop threats and obey the Comelec's decision.

Vizcarra, who took her oath to acting mayor before a judge here last week, wrote the government heads of the local government and asked them to recognize her as acting mayor.

However, Tapidel issued a memo letter saying the Comelec order was not final and executory.

Officials continued to honor transactions with Tapidel after he, through lawyer Mario Ibarla Bacus, filed a motion for reconsideration last week before the Comelec en banc.

Bacus said the Comelec second division had erred in ruling that his proclamation was invalidated by "duress, coercion, intimidation and fraud."

Tapidel received 8,647 votes while his closest rival, former Councilor Wilfredo Tabag, got 8,420 votes.

"It would be an injustice to my more than 8,000 constituents who voted (for) me into office if I will just forfeit to still serving interests of some people. We will go until [to] the Supreme Court if it is necessary," Tapidel said. Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Luzon, magbantay para sa tamang bilang!

TEXTBOOK COUNT 2

Schedule and allocation of textbooks per region

Region/Province	No. of Recipient Cities	No. of School Districts	No. of Pupil	Science Textbooks	Delivery Schedule
GRAND TOTAL - ROUND 1	1,980	113	1,811	1,480,750	
I TOTAL	1,054	158	213	179,840	
Regional Office				1,941	Aug 20 - Aug 27
Ilocos Norte	113	19	17	15,300	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Ilocos Sur	197	19	30	26,460	Jul 29 - Aug 5
La Union I	87	1	14	12,600	Jul 29 - Aug 5
La Union II	87	1	14	12,600	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Pangasinan I	142	22	46	39,187	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Pangasinan II	142	22	46	39,187	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Abra	87	7	10	9,000	Aug 2 - 10
Benguet	87	13	19	17,100	Aug 2 - 10
Mountain Prov.	58	5	7	6,300	Aug 2 - 10
Ifugao	58	5	7	6,300	Aug 2 - 10
Kalinga	58	5	7	6,300	Aug 2 - 10
Apayao	58	5	7	6,300	Aug 2 - 10
Baguio City	31	1	1	2,700	Aug 2 - 10
II TOTAL	1,054	158	213	179,840	
Regional Office				1,941	Jul 29 - Aug 20
Batanes	12	1	1	1,800	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Cagayan	113	19	25	22,500	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Isabela	197	19	30	26,460	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Nueva Vizcaya	87	13	19	17,100	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Quirino	58	5	7	6,300	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Aurora	58	5	7	6,300	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Bataan	87	13	19	17,100	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Bulacan I	142	22	46	39,187	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Bulacan II	142	22	46	39,187	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Nueva Ecija I	87	13	19	17,100	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Nueva Ecija II	87	13	19	17,100	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Pampanga I	87	13	19	17,100	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Pampanga II	87	13	19	17,100	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Tarlac I	87	13	19	17,100	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Tarlac II	87	13	19	17,100	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Zambales	87	13	19	17,100	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Olongapo City	31	1	1	2,700	Jul 29 - Aug 5
III TOTAL	1,519	90	211	208,187	
Regional Office				1,941	Jul 29 - Aug 20
Aklan I	113	19	30	26,460	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Aklan II	113	19	30	26,460	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Antique	113	19	30	26,460	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Capiz	113	19	30	26,460	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Iloilo	113	19	30	26,460	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Iloilo City	31	1	1	2,700	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Negros Occidental	113	19	30	26,460	Jul 29 - Aug 5
Bacolod City	31	1	1	2,700	Jul 29 - Aug 5
IV TOTAL	1,980	113	1,811	1,480,750	
Regional Office				1,941	Aug 20 - Sept 10
Batangas I	142	22	46	39,187	Aug 2 - 10
Batangas II	142	22	46	39,187	Aug 2 - 10
Cavite I	87	13	19	17,100	Aug 2 - 10
Cavite II	87	13	19	17,100	Aug 2 - 10
Laguna I	87	13	19	17,100	Aug 2 - 10
Laguna II	87	13	19	17,100	Aug 2 - 10
Quezon I	87	13	19	17,100	Aug 2 - 10
Quezon II	87	13	19	17,100	Aug 2 - 10
Rizal I	87	13	19	17,100	Aug 2 - 10
Rizal II	87	13	19	17,100	Aug 2 - 10
Marinduque	58	5	7	6,300	Aug 2 - 10
Occidental Mindoro	58	5	7	6,300	Aug 2 - 10
Oriental Mindoro	87	13	19	17,100	Aug 2 - 10
Palawan	87	13	19	17,100	Aug 2 - 10
Romblon	58	5	7	6,300	Aug 2 - 10
Puerto Princesa City	31	1	1	2,700	Aug 2 - 10
Lucena City	31	1	1	2,700	Aug 2 - 10

To volunteer as a textbook delivery watcher in your school, call the following numbers: National Textbook Delivery Program / Philippine Businessmen Forum at 890-6280 • Instructional Materials Council Secretariat (DepED) at 634-1072 or use DETxt (Department of Education Text Messaging service) at 0919) 456-9651

DepED

The World Bank

GDDP

MONITORING ORGANIZATIONS: ACT Philippines • The Asia Foundation • Association of Librarians and Librarians in Nueva Ecija • Bay Scouts of the Philippines • Caucus of Development NGO Networks (Code – NGO) • Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Government • Civil Society Network for Education Reforms, Inc. (E-Net) • Girl Scouts of the Philippines • Kapalong Kauswagan Foundation • Kompanyang Pilipino • Naga City People's Council • National Citizens Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) • Negros Center for People Empowerment and Rural Development • Procurement Watch, Inc. • Social Watch Visayas • Ten Outstanding Boy Scouts of the Philippines Association • Transparency and Accountability Network (NATIONAL COORDINATOR: Government Watch – Citizens' Watch of Government

Docs' exodus threatens hospitals' closure

By Rony C. Amarado
PDI Phelps Bureau

BAMBAUERS CITY—It is just a matter of time when community and district hospitals in Baguio Benguet close down due to the absence of doctors who have now become scarce.

The gloomy scenario was painted by Provincial Health Officer Ely Villapando after all the doctors in the province, who took the nursing board exams, flunked.

Last March 31 of the 207 doctors in the province finished nursing. Forty-four of them are government doctors, said Villapando.

During the board exams last June 23 took and passed the examination, Villapando, however, could not say how many of those who passed were government doctors.

But last Friday, he said the doctors turned courses held a party. Yesterday they took their oaths in Bontoc Ifugao.

The development alarmed Villapando, saying it would not be long before these doctors would leave the country and work abroad as nurses.

Villapando said that because they were also doctors, many hospitals in other countries would be very interested in hiring them as nurses and would not saddle them with as many requirements.

He said for Benguet of two dozen nurses would be working abroad soon. He, however, did not identify them.

With the flight of doctors to Malaysia and about 12 community and some district hospitals in the province might close down since there would be no doctors assigned there.

Villapando lamented what he said was the indifference of the government toward the plight of government doctors who were forced to shift careers or nurses due to low pay.

He said employees of the judiciary, prosecutors' offices, the military and the police have been receiving increases in salaries and benefits but health workers, especially the doctors, were not given such consideration.

The salary of government doctors here ranged from P15,000 to P45,000 a month. Nurses receive an average of P9,000 a month.

But if they work in the United States, these nurses get P24,000 as monthly income and P13,000, in the United Kingdom.

And February, the more than 3,000 health workers in the province circulated a position paper that sought a 100 percent increase in salaries to encourage government doctors and nurses to stay in the Philippines and improve the delivery of health services in general.

They also called for the training and accreditation of nurses as "adequate HO support program" so they could be deployed to countryside towns in the absence of doctors.

If the government would not heed to stop the exodus of doctors and nurses abroad, the position paper warned that the health system of the country would collapse.

PEER-A-BOO
A producer of baked in Pagsanjan, Mandaue City takes a closer look at the duck eggs to determine if they are ready to be cooked.

180 workers go on strike in Davao school

DAVAO CITY—Some 180 workers of the Ateneo de Davao University (ADDU) went into strike on Thursday over terminations and alleged harassment by the school management.

Gil Jolongo, union president, told the Inquirer on Thursday night that their dissidence stage a strike was 6, called after they were summoned and given options by the Internal Conciliation and Mediation Board (ICMB).

"[The] ICMB gave us options but we can no longer accept [them] because we had already decided to have this strike already at 10 the 15-day cooling off period, which ended on July 21," Jolongo told the Inquirer.

Prior to the protest, the union, composed of 126 regular grade schoolteachers and 54 non-teaching personnel of the university, has already filed at least four notices of strike with the NCMB.

Illegal termination

The union said the ADDU management illegally terminated nine regular grade schoolteachers, two pre-school librarians, the college librarian and non-teaching personnel union president Virginia Gacer.

Some of the reasons cited by the university's management for the dismissals were lack of confidence and redundancy of positions.

Jolongo said the ADDU management also engaged in harassment of union members and officers and gross violation of the collective bargaining agreement particularly on work schedule and several other issues.

"Termination is not the only issue here. The harassment the management is doing [to] us to end the extended work hours they are implementing are also an issue," Jolongo said.

Strike illegal, too

But Edmundo Marbeza, ADDU president, declared the strike illegal.

"We don't know what the (strike) will end. It's too (early) to (say)," Helen Campos, one of the terminated librarians, told the Inquirer.

Campos, who spent six years as a grade school librarian, accused her termination letter on June 23.

She said the management is terminating workers "one by batches."

Jonathan A.B. Bautista, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Abra nursery for rare bamboo type proposed

BANGUED, Abra—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and non-government organizations in the province are pushing for the establishment of a nursery for a rare species of bamboo here to help the bamboo crafts in the province.

The DENR and local NGOs want the International Tropical Timber Organization to help them establish a nursery for the paper type of bamboo in the province to further develop the local craft.

Mona Ribaya, director of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office, said paper, which belongs to the *yimuhka* species of the bamboo family, is endemic in the province of Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Benguet and the hilltops of Abra. She said this type of bamboo could not be found anywhere else in the country.

Velocio, however, said paper could not be found growing in the upland towns of Abra where the climate is cooler because it thrives on areas with "lower elevation."

The "Type 2" bamboo of Abra (six months of rain season and six months of dry season) requires it said like for paper to grow and propagate, he said.

Abra grows industrial trees and does not thrive most bulbs of trees because the species could not tolerate too much moisture, Velocio said.

"It is inherent in its characteristic to grow where there is minimal water because too much rain stunts its growth and causes the deterioration of its pulp," he said.

The species can survive extreme heat and it continues to survive in dire need this Ilocos despite the change in climate that has been observed in the past years (eight months of dry season and four months of wet season).

Velocio said paper could grow up to 20 to 25 meters high and 2 to 3.5 inches in diameter. Its poles have to be harvested as it becomes fertile and collapses.

He said paper is pliable and its use is "just right," ideal for basketry making.

"Abra and another bamboo species, rattan (*uway*), grows abundantly in the province and the forests demand for rapid during the past years.

In the Cordillera, one only grows in Abra and Ifugao but unlike paper, it could be found in other parts of the country, he said.

Amelia Rose Pascual, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ROUNDUP

Molestation complaint

BAGUIO CITY—A 32-year-old man was accused of sexually molesting his two stepdaughters, aged 12, 13 and 16 years old. The child's father was molested to the police because she and her sisters couldn't longer bear the sexual abuses allegedly committed by Victorino Villasis of Barangay Asin Roots, Asin Road here. Upon the victim's denial molesting the girls. He added that he was even offered to take his stepdaughters. But the girl claimed that Villasis choked molesting them last month. He said she told her mother about the rapes but her mother scolded her instead.

Felipe Salmo, PDI Baguio Bureau

Illegal logs seized

LEGAZPI CITY—Around 1,447 board feet of narra lumber were seized during an operation by the Philippine Coast Guard in the coastal water of Barangay Bonot, Tabaco City on Wednesday. The lumber pieces, worth around P350,000, were found on board a motorboat being manned by two of them who escaped when the Coast Guard personnel approached them. The lumber cargo had no permits from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The logs and equipment seized were to the Catanduanes Coast Guard station. Lt. Comdr. Edilberto Cruz said the seized lumber will be auctioned off.

Joyce Pilapil, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Bridge completed

LAGAWE CITY—The Ibo-Nasa-I Bridge in Banaue, Ifugao-Bontoc route was open to motorists. Costing about P16 million, the bridge started to be constructed in the last quarter of 1998. The bridge is 30 meters long and 7.20 meters wide, said Antonio Bodiao officer. Jones Bridge of the provincial engineer's office.

Rhodante Pinsay, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

NPA rebel slain

BUGUIAS—A suspected communist rebel was killed in an encounter yesterday between government soldiers and 15 New People's Army rebels in the boundary of Benguet and Ifugao town on July 21, military reports said. Police recovered an M-14 rifle with one magazine loaded with bullets, grey homemade shotgun from the encounter site. On the same day, police caught a section chief, Nicolas with a home-made rifle with two magazines and 20 bullets in an M-16 rifle in Barangay Ambaguio Bayombong town.

Alfredo Palauto, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor: Jon Bandoquil
Bureau Chief: Rolando B. Fernandez

Candon villages cited for eco-waste scheme

By Leoncio Bulfin Jr.
Candon City

THANKS to the tale of a borrowed pillow, two villages in Candon City won national recognition in the nationwide search for model barangays practicing eco-waste management.

Barangays Cabaritan and Calaoa-an are among the 20 areas in the country that will be honored as top implementers of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

Residents of Cabaritan said the tale of the borrowed pillow was one of the driving forces that made village officials and residents join hands to turn to recycling scrap materials to create pillows and other usable materials.

The activity eventually helped manage the village's solid waste.

The tale goes:

Ten years ago, a man from the nearby village of San Andres took home his fiancée, a girl from Rapangao, Sinait, for a visit. With little preparation and because the man's family was poor, his parents had to borrow a pillow from a neighbor to make them comfortable for the night.

When the man accompanied his fiancée back to Rapangao, the woman told him that she would not want to marry him anymore. The reason was the borrowed pillow.

Story of a borrowed pillow inspires residents

"Kasarmak ken ti pamilion ti pangbakrona ngaruna pay pangan ya ibtak could you find me and our family if you could not even have enough pillows in your house?!" the woman said.

The story spread to nearby villages, including Cabaritan (page 45/c). The residents, who are famous for their zesty and hospitality, felt slighted and started to discuss ways to avoid a repeat of the incident.

"Our general intention was unlike to our main ache and his fiancee had a good relationship and it had to be broken only by a borrowed pillow," said Lauvidencinda Rabosa.

The residents then agreed to help one another prepare for unexpected visitors. They also promised to make the comfort of every visitor a concern of every household. Most residents are related and belong to the indigenous Ilago tribe.

One of the first steps, they agreed, was to produce pillows, instead of store, they turned to plastic and waste scraps as filling materials for the pillows.

Without the city government began an intensified eco-waste management in 2002, the residents saw the chance to use waste materials. The village has its own material recovery facility (MRF) that receives wastes for final sorting, segregation, composting and recycling.

Cabaritan, which has 96 families, is now in achieving a zero waste level as almost 90 percent of its solid wastes is recycled or sold, village officials said.

Elmer Leslie, city environment and natural resources officer, said Candon had 37 MRFs in barangay Calaoa-an, residents recycle plastics into plastic bags, slippers, fans and other materials, he said.

Calaoa-an barangay chair Rosemarie Tolentino said her village, the pilot area for eco-waste management in the Ilocos region, has become a tourist destination of sorts in Candon.

She said the visitors were attracted to the display of recycled waste materials and residents opened a little through selling various items made out of recycled wastes.

Mayor Allen Flaguras said the selection of Cabaritan and Calaoa-an to the national awards indicated that the city's eco-waste program was gaining results.

Preserving Masferre's photographs

By Desiree Cabeza
Laguna, Mt. Province

THE FAMILY of the late Cordillera photographer Eduardo Masferre is seeking new technology to preserve about 3,000 "priceless" negative films that recorded the Igorot culture.

Pancho Masferre, son of the famous photographer, said the family wanted to store the photographs in compact discs, but they were not certain if these would last for many years.

"This is easily one of the methods [that we are considering], but the problem is there is no evidence if it can last for many years. Maybe in the next five years, there would be another technology," the younger Masferre said.

Masferre said the family was glad that a new generation of photographers in Laguna had been documenting the culture of the town where his father grew up.

Aside from the family heirlooms in barangay Hacienda, Masferre's photographs are on display at the St. Joseph's Ivy Inside the mission compound and at the Masferre Inn and Restaurant.

The Masferres have been displaying their old collections at the Laguna community in the early 1900s at the St. Mary's Church since Dec. 8 last year, when villagers marked the feast of Sta. Mary the Virgin.

The photographs featured the early community that was built by the American Episcopal missionaries in 1904.

Masferre said Jaime, one of his brothers who is based in the United States, had asked the family to preserve the photographs. He said they were also careful about privacy and the possible duplication of film negatives.

Masferre, who has been reading books about preserving of films, said he found that some procedures guaranteed films destroyed the negatives.

"We are careful about the condition of the negatives. Some of them have mold and some have been [undergoing] discoloration," he said.

He said they were keeping 3,000 negative films, but the photographer's best collections numbered almost 200. The negatives are kept in a steel cabinet, he added.

Aside from molds and discoloration, some of the films are peeling off, Masferre said.

The original prints are in good condition although molds are starting to form on them, he said.

Masferre recalled that his father had always been keen on retouching the prints. "The practice of my father on retouching the pictures is by using pens and ink on visible white and dark spots. He used pens and ink to cover the shade to make the spots not so visible."

Eduardo Masferre was born on April 16, 1901. His parents were Senior Jaime Masferre, a Spanish soldier who settled in Sagada in 1893, and Concepcion, an Igorot lass who was the daughter of Langdew.

Eduardo, who was then 5 years old, left Sagada to study in Spain. He came back to work for the American missionaries. He also taught English at the St. Mary's School.

Photography became a hobby for Masferre, who went to Sagada, Bontoc, Kalinga and Ifugao to document the culture of the indigenous people.

In 1933, he fought by land inches a box of camera and a book on elementary photography from Kodak. In the US, according to Barbarena Dacuz, a former Sagada mayor who wrote a biography on him.

Visayas, Mindanao, magbantay para sa tamang bilang!

TEXTBOOK COUNT 2

Schedule and allocation of textbooks per region

Region/Division	No. of Recipient Elem.	No. of School Districts	No. of High Schools	GRAND TOTAL ESTIMATED	Delivery Schedule
GRAND TOTAL ZONE 1	1,810	168	1,391	1,720,000	
I TOTAL	1,806	165	861	1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Ilocos Norte	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Ilocos Sur	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
La Union	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Region I Combined	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Alaminos City	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Dagupan City	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
San Carlos City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Urdaneta City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Alaminos City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Dagupan City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
San Carlos City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Urdaneta City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
II TOTAL	1,810	178	861	1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Cagayan	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Isabela	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Nueva Vizcaya	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Quirino	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Region II Combined	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Batanes	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Cauayan City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Santiago City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Tuguegarao City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
III TOTAL	1,810	178	861	1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Aurora	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Bataan	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Bulacan	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Nueva Ecija	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Pampanga	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Tarlac	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Zambales	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Angeles City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Olongapo City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
IV-A TOTAL	1,810	178	861	1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Batangas	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Cavite	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Laguna	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Quezon	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Rizal	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Lucena City	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Antipolo City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
V TOTAL	1,810	178	861	1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Albay	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Camarines Norte	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Camarines Sur	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Catanduanes	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Masbate	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Sorsogon	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Naga City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
GRAND TOTAL				1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Aklan	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Antique	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Capiz	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Iloilo	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Negros Occ	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Bacolod City	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Iloilo City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Roxas City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
VII TOTAL	1,810	178	861	1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Bohol	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Cebu	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Negros Or.	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Siquijor	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Cebu City	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Lapu-Lapu City	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Mandaue City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Tagbilaran City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
VIII TOTAL	1,810	178	861	1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Biliran	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Eastern Samar	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Leyte	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Northern Samar	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Samar	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Southern Leyte	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Tacloban City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Ormoc City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
IX TOTAL	1,810	178	861	1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Basilan	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Sulu	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Tawi-Tawi	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Zamboanga del Norte	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Zamboanga del Sur	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Zamboanga Sibugay	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Pagadian City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Zamboanga City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
X TOTAL	1,810	178	861	1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Bukidnon	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Camiguin	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Lanao del Norte	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Misamis Occ.	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Misamis Or.	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Cagayan de Oro City	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Iligan City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Malaybalay City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
XI TOTAL	1,810	178	861	1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Davao del Norte	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Davao del Sur	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Davao Or.	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Compostela Valley	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Davao City	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Digos City	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Tagum City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
XII TOTAL	1,810	178	861	1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Cotabato	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Maguindanao	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
North Cotabato	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Sarangani	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
South Cotabato	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Sultan Kudarat	43	3	11	14,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Cotabato City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Kidapawan City	50	3	13	17,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
ARMM TOTAL				1,150,000	
Regional Office				1,150	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Lanao del Sur	215	21	111	144,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Basilan	262	25	144	197,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Sulu	342	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Tawi-Tawi	336	28	182	230,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15
Marawi City	108	8	60	78,000	Sept 20 - Oct 15

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Supreme Court: Poe protest valid

First page A1

noted on valid legal ground," presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said.

Bunye said Mr. Arroyo's lawyers would wait for the service of the summons and file an answer within the time required by the SET.

Citizenship issue revived

Mr. Arroyo's lawyer, Romulo Macalintal, immediately questioned Khan's statement.

"There is nothing in the resolution which says that the pictures are sufficient in form and substance," Macalintal told the tribunal. "That should be determined only after the filing of our answer. That's the only time the issue can be taken on that."

He said the fact that the SET did not issue an order for the removal of the contested ballot boxes and election returns showed it had yet to rule on the issue of sufficiency of the election protest.

"That's only Mr. Khan talking. Mr. Khan should remember that the SET is governed by another set of rules," Macalintal said.

Macalintal also cited the senate's rule on the issue of Poe's citizenship.

Before the election, some lawyers questioned Poe's claim that he was a natural-born citizen since 1991. The Supreme Court dismissed the case, clearing the way for the senator's candidacy.

Safe-keeping the ballots

Poe's lawyers could not be reached for comment on the SET order but Leguido's counsel, Ferdie Rodriguez, said: "We thank the Supreme Court for its speedy action on the case."

Senior Justice Flerida Ruth Romero quoted Khan as saying that, as soon as the SET receives Mr. Arroyo's reply, "it will deliberate and issue an order for the safe-keeping of the ballots and the appointment of the hearing commission.

"Whether there is merit or not in the complaint, that would depend on the presentation of evidence."

She said when the hearing could be completed, Khan said: "Everybody sticks to the rules and no one files any dilatory or frivolous pleadings that are intended to delay the process, all of these things can be completed inside of a year."

Cardinal Vidal as mediator

Outside the court, Catholic Church leaders were working behind the scenes on ay to heal political divisions that had torn the country.

In Cebu City, Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal said he had requested an offer of Mr. Arroyo to act as a mediator between her administration and opposition leaders, particularly Poe and evangelist Eddie Villanueva, another defeated presidential candidate.

"I will be visiting the national (opposition) leaders to ask them what is their idea of reconciliation," Vidal told the reporters yesterday.

In their separate election protests, the rival Leguido-Poe camps accused Mr. Arroyo's running mate, Noli de Castro, of "daily distorted and rightful" winners of the May 10 elections and is unduly Congress' proclamation of Mr. Arroyo and Mr. Castro.

They accused the administration of committing "massive and widespread electoral fraud, anomalies and irregularities" which led to an illegal increase in the votes for Mr. Arroyo and De Castro.

All 14 members of the high court were present at yesterday's deliberations, including Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and newly appointed Justice Minita Chico-Nazario.

180-day timetable

Associate Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago did not participate in the deliberations as regards to election protest "due to a close relationship to a party," the SET said.

Khan said that the SET had set its rule where the vice presidential aspirants would actually be heard and if this would be open to the media.

PET rules require the resolution of election results should be finished within 180 days.

Khan said the SET would appoint lawyers as "hearing commissioners" who would do the actual checking and recount of the contested ballots and election returns (ERs) or vote tallies.

The commissioners' witnesses would also have to submit affidavits before they testified.

Khan said that the totalization might not be done in the Supreme Court in Manila owing to the huge volume of documents and number of ballots that would be recounted.

Problematic provinces

To hasten the process, the tribunal could also ask the contenders to present the contested results from three "most problematic" provinces where they believed irregularities were most rampant, Khan said.

Those would then be minutely examined and the PET could decide on the petitions based on the recount of the votes from those three provinces, he added.

Poe had asked the tribunal to annul the fifth to 10,334 precincts from seven provinces, one city and seven municipalities and to recount the ballots in 138,339 precincts from 42 cities and provinces.

Leguido wants the revision of the ERs from 9,607 precincts in 83 provinces, one city and five municipalities and ballot results from 126,404 precincts in six cities and provinces.

History unkind to losers

"If the Ching (who topped Erap in 2001), it would not be because of the tribunal but due to cheating tactics of's other of the parties," he added.

Lawyer Estin Brillantes Jr., Poe's counsel, had said the tribunal should base won over Mr. Arroyo by 1.1 million votes.

The whole protest process would cost the complainants around P65 million to P100 per ballot box. Poe and Leguido had to separately pay a P50,000 filing fee and a P100,000 down payment.

Vidal explains role

Vidal said he became active work as mediator started two weeks ago, or less than a month after he met with Ms. Arroyo to discuss the latter's peace and reconciliation projects.

Ms. Arroyo visited Cebu on May 30 and asked the prelate to talk to the opposition leaders in a bid to bring political peace to the country.

Vidal said he accepted Ms. Arroyo's offer because he wanted to help bring about political reconciliation before his retirement on Feb. 6, 2006, when he will turn 75.

Since talking with the President, Vidal said he had been contacting the leaders of opposition parties, including Poe and Villanueva, to get their views on unity and reconciliation.

By consulting the opposition, Vidal said he hoped to come up with "some sort of agenda for unity and reconciliation. Then I will present this to the leaders themselves." With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr

Oops, GMA goofed: ₱20B, not ₱100B, in gov't savings

First page A1

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye gave the correct figure in a radio interview yesterday. Bunye said Ms. Arroyo would also not use the number of presidential advisers.

Ms. Arroyo also promised in her pre-Sona speech to the business community last week that the government would generate up to P 200 billion in savings from its belt-tightening measures.

Malacañang made a correction, saying the savings would only amount to P20 billion.

Noting her first three years in Malacañang, Ms. Arroyo ordered 40 agencies. There are some 1.4 million government employees.

While abolishing scores of agencies, the President is creating new ones. Ms. Arroyo will create a "Malacañang Office of Gas, a Sanitary Affairs" to enable her to "listen" to the needs of the urban and rural poor, Veronica Villavicencio, secretary of the National Anti-Poverty Commission, said. (See related story on Page A20.)

Ms. Arroyo's plan to abolish many agencies is under the supervision of the Office of the President now Eds have millions government workers.

The Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage), which represents more than 300,000 government employees nationwide, said the President's plan to abolish many agencies would mean widespread unrest.

"She emphasized job creation and is promising 6 million to 10 million jobs but intends to retain hundreds of thousands of government employees," Courage chairman-general Joel Rocamora told reporters.

Malacañang could not name other agencies and advisers would be axed and how many more were on the chopping block.

Updated list of agencies

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said that his staff was still compiling an updated list of the presidential agencies and advisers and that the list was likely to be released today.

As of end-2003, Ms Arroyo had 11 presidential advisers and 34 presidential assistants on top of dozens of special assistants, liaison officers, undersecretaries, assistant secretaries and consultants in the Office of the President, data said Inquirer.

"The President is really serious in keeping a lean and mean bureaucracy," Bunye said.

"She would like to show Congress and the public that the Executive branch is taking the lead in the belt-tightening measures."

Although Malacañang has yet to announce how many would be affected by the "reengineering" of the bureaucracy, Bunye said that state employees who opt to take early retirements or volunteer jobs are encouraged. They would be paid unexpended income this program has already been handed.

In her Sona, Ms Arroyo said: "We have to tear away layers of inefficiency piled on by decades of political accommodation — redundancy in the national government, waste in local governments and pointless procedures for getting done what isn't needed anyway to oversee the public welfare."

Silver parachute

Ms Arroyo hoped that the retired government employees would use their "silver parachutes" as seed capital for their livelihood projects. But Edwin Lacierda said the President would ensure after the layoffs would be granted higher salaries

Joker to Aussies: Too much, RP won't be buffer again

First page A1

flags in front of Makati's RCBC Plaza, which houses the Australian Embassy.

An antiriot police stood by the protesters yelled, "Alabaster Senator, warmonger," and held up a sign that read: "Mr. MacGyver is not here!" The Philippines and pays hard from Australia.

"The Australian government must put the blame on itself," protest leader Charito Cobcoba said. "Being a supporter of the military strike (against Iraq), Australia is an automatic target of Iraqi insurgents who are seeking independence."

Most, if despite had been killed, the kidnappings would hasten control because the militants would not stop while their country is occupied and they're not free," Cobcoba said.

'Too much'

In a privilege speech, Senator Nenita expressed outrage over Australian Prime Minister John Howard's claim that the Philippines' withdrawal from Iraq would encourage terrorists and endanger Australian lives.

"What the Australian leader spoke is that the Philippines should serve as a buffer to Australians lives the second time around," the senator said. "That is too much."

According to Arroyo, strategic important concern for Australia was what prompted the United States to offer the Philippines as a buffer to Australians lives during World War II.

"For that, the Philippines fielded thousands of troops to Bataan to tee up the Japanese invading forces that were poised to invade Australia. For that we suffered tremendous casualties," the senator said.

"In a world order where globalization has become a mantra of world leaders and where nations are to be united in unselfish or the altar of international cooperation, we should not lose our capacity for courage. Otherwise, we will find ourselves morally and emotionally disarmed."

During her State of the Nation Address on Monday, President Macapagal-Arroyo defended her order for a troop pullout, saying, "The Philippines has no policy that demands sacrifice of human lives."

Ms Arroyo said she decided to withdraw the troops from Iraq early to ensure the safety of about 1.5 million Filipino workers in the Middle East. Of the more than 4,000 it's Iraq, She also suggested that the kidnappings and violence would have continued in Iraq even if the Filipino peacekeepers had not been recalled.

Her deputy spokesperson, Ms Sandra Abalos, also said it would be better for concerned governments to focus on steps that would prevent kidnappings and attacks against foreign workers in Iraq instead of "getting into that knee-jerk reactions of blaming a country that was in fact a victim."

No need to apologize

Arroyo's pressure by the Philippines and Spain over its scathing remarks. Downer said Canberra saw no need to apologize.

"We don't have to worry too much when other countries criticize us occasionally," he said in a television interview. "The fact is the reason they are sensitive about it is because this is a controversial issue."

In Madrid, Spain's foreign affairs ministry summoned Australian Ambassador Susan Tanner on Monday to tell her that Downer's comments were unacceptable, "all the more so as they came from a friendly country."

Spain's Foreign Ministry between Australian ambassador and Spanish officials pressed critical as is allowed him to explain Canberra's position.

Spanish example

"Clearly there are complaints in what actually happened in Spain surrounding the elec. Iyas Duris. But, look, at the end of the day, the (re-)elected can only be saying the Spanish example is order to boster their case against other countries," he said.

"I am afraid it is the same with the Philippines in doing not what Australia wants and Bulgaria recently did and stand up to the terrorists, but they decided to succumb to the demands of the terrorists."

Spain's ambassador to Australia Rafael Dezcallar issued a statement saying he did not wish to enter into a debate with Downer, but that Madrid was disobeyed government in the fight against global terrorism, independently of the Iraq war.

The recently elected Spanish government pulled out its troops from Iraq in the aftermath of the Madrid train bombings that reportedly killed 200 here in March.

The labor opposition in Australia said while it opposed government should not negotiate with terrorists, it considered Downer's use of "megaphone diplomacy" to criticize the Philippines not Spain.

New Zealand

New Zealand has 61 Army engineers and medics in Iraq on rebuilding projects, like building roads, in southern Iraq.

Golf said that going in to Sadaqa (sister) definitely made further kidnappings more likely.

"It's the consequences are, in saying one life, that it results in the loss of dozens of other lives, then that clearly was not the right decision to take," he said.

Prime Minister Helen Clark added, "I will not allow yourself to be pushed around like that, you simply create hostage-taking."

Philippine Embassy Charge d'Affaires Aileen Capeo said Golf's comments were "unfortunate."

She said the Philippines will continue working overseas and if the government is not seen as protecting our citizens, what will happen to our citizens," Capeo said.

Renewed criticisms

In Washington, the Bush administration renewed its criticisms of the Philippines for brokering a deal with terrorists to free Dr. Is Orin.

Asked about President Arroyo's strong defense of her decision to withdraw Filipino troops in a swap for the citizen's freedom, State Department's deputy spokesperson, Adam J. Ereli, said there was no "empirical evidence" to prove negotiations had led to more hostage-taking.

However, the US official said, "our view is clear that it does not serve the interests of those fighting terrorism to negotiate with terrorists."

Before the Philippine government yielded to the demands of Dr. Is Cruz's kidnappers and agreed to accelerate the withdrawal of all 51 Filipino troops in Iraq, the final substantive issue was handing Manila for taking a strong stand against domestic terrorism.

Relations still strong

Trying to maintain good relations with the Philippines which had been a priority for special attention of being a non-Nato ally, Ereli said Monday that Washington's relations with Manila would remain strong despite its negotiating with terrorists.

"I don't have any basis to conclude that it affects other aspects of Philippine participation and commitment to fighting terrorism in the Philippines or elsewhere," the spokesperson said.

As Dr. Is Cruz was reunited with his family on Friday, El Ambassador to Manila Francis Ricciardone flew to Washington for "consultations" on the status of relations with the Philippines.

Disapproval tactic!

That would be a tactic to express disapproval, more than a need for the ambassador to hold direct talks with officials with Bush administration officials.

Ereli said the ambassador returned for "personal leave time" as well as for consultations. Asked when Ricciardone would return to Manila, Ereli said, "I don't have a specific time period for you." Reports from Michael Lim Ubac, AP, AFP and Reuters

Believe it or not: Metro air clean

First page A1

reputable levels."

But either 11 we're imagining all that smog, 20 emergency call, and basic bride to do with breathing, or 71 the 1999 Clean Air Act, which the officials in, failed in making the environment... needs an urgent review.

In a statement, the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said, "The quality of air-use benefits in Metro Manila and some parts of adjacent provinces is within the policy standards that safeguards human health and the environment."

The DMB cited data gathered by eight monitoring stations that evaluated the air content for you per pollutants like sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, photochemical oxidant, carbon monoxide and suspended particles.

Results "did not exceed" the guidelines for "ambient air quality" as set by the DAA, the DMB happily declared.

We have the current wet season to thank, the bureau added. "The rainy condition accelerates dispersion of pollutants."

The EMB said the monitoring stations set up in the 2003's mere aerial pollutants from all known sources — vehicle exhaust, industries, cigarette smoke and burning garbage.

The stations are located at Ateneo de Manila, Port Southern, PEPCo, Pasay, Valenzuela — all within Metro Manila, and in Clark, Pampanga; Los Baños, Laguna; Cavite and Batangas.

Metro Manila and parts of Bulacan, Cavite and Rizal monitored on one or shot, the DMB explained. An air shed is composed of areas with similar topography and which experience a common climate.

Oh, motherhoven, all together now: Inhale. And wipe that grin off your face.

Dell PowerEdge P700

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Gov't taps euro bond market anew

By Michelle V. Remo and Doris C. Dumlao

THE NATIONAL government has started pre-funding its budget requirements for next year with a euro bond flotation Monday night, a ranking government official disclosed yesterday.

According to the government source, the bond float, which is being underwritten by Credit Suisse First Boston and Deutsche Bank, was intended to help fill in the gap between the government's expected lower revenue collection and higher spending in 2005.

"The bond float is still necessary being booked, therefore we must determine the rate for the front-running item. We have to set a specific amount to be raised from it (bond float), but it is intended partly for pre-funding the (national government's) financing requirements," said the government source, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The bonds will mature in 2034.

The Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has given the national government an approval to offer at least 200 million worth of euro bonds, banking sources said yesterday.

The offering was given a BB rating by Standard & Poor's following two or two notches below investment grade.

According to the government's financial program, the budget deficit is expected to hit P146.2 billion in 2005. The expected deficit will be the result of the projected P700 billion in revenue collection compared with the estimated P846 billion in expenditure.

The government addresses the budget deficit by underwriting local and foreign borrowings. The Department of Finance, in coordination with other economic agencies, normally sets how much borrowings will be made locally and abroad.

Aside from pre-funding the government's financing requirement next year, the source said, the bond float was also intended to maximize the national government's borrowing requirements for this year.

The Treasury department said, it said the national government has almost completed its foreign borrowing requirements of $2.4 billion for this year, and only needed about $50 million.

Banking sources said the offering might be increased from the $200 million euro minimum target given favorable response from investors. Offers for the issuance has reportedly reached twice the minimum target.

Foreign investors are slowly regaining their appetite for Philippine debt paper after President Macapagal-Arroyo secured a landslide win two terms. They likewise welcomed her administration's resolve to curb the government's budget deficits and restructure the debt-ridden power sector.

S&P said this BB rating-grade credit rating on the Philippine government's euro bond offering was supported by the country's adequate external liquidity, with total debt service projected at 80 percent of merchandise exports in 2004, similar to the ratio disclosed for varied years.

It projected that the total external debt would be 120 percent of current account receipts this year, similar to the ratio disclosed in 2003.

"The government deficit is likely to remain relatively high at more than 4 percent of GDP this year, compared with 4.6 percent in 2003, due largely to weak tax collection," said S&P's credit analyst Agost Benard, amounts increase in the Asia-Pacific Sovereign and International Public Finance Ratings Group.

"Government debt, excluding amounts guaranteed by the government, is relatively low by public-sector comparisons, at approaching 64 percent of GDP this year, compared with the median level of 51 percent for similarly rated sovereigns," he added.

The analyst expected interest payments to consume about 27 percent of government revenues, up substantially from 22 percent in 1999.

He warned that the weak fiscal profile and shallow domestic capital markets formed a continuing dependence on external capital to underwrite economic growth, raising the vulnerability of Philippine financial markets to adverse developments, and contributing to macroeconomic volatility.

The analyst said the Philippines' success can base was some hinting to weak public finances. It was correct that the country's tax revenue is a share of GDP had fallen by more than 5 percentage points since 1997, due largely to weak revenue collections, although it is showing some improvement.

Furthermore, the S&P analyst expressed caution on the increas-

(story continues)

SMC breaks ground for 5th Vietnam venture

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FOOD and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. (SMC) has formally started the building up of a state-of-the-art beverage plant in Vietnam, marking its fifth overseas investment in the country.

Following groundbreaking rites yesterday, SMC said the new facility to be owned by San Miguel Vietnam Co., Ltd. will be built in a 100,000-square-meter property in Binh Thuan City, Dong Nai Province.

San Miguel Vietnam will manufacture high quality beverages like bottled water and fruit-based drinks using locally sourced raw materials.

San Miguel Vietnam will be SMC's fifth facility in the country after San Miguel Brewery Vietnam Ltd. in Nha Trang, San Miguel Hoa Binh Packaging Co. Ltd. in Ho Chi Minh City, San Miguel Yamamura Asia Phuong Giao in Ho Phong City, and TTC Vietnam in Binh Duong. TTC Vietnam is one of the biggest organized backend bag factories operations in Vietnam.

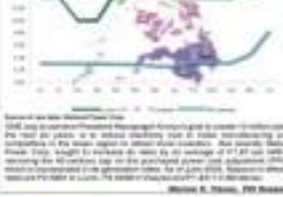
SMC's first and chief executive officer Eduardo M. Cojuangco Jr. said: "We were among the first international companies to see Vietnam's potential in the early 1990s. Now we seek to build a strategic relationship with our partners and economies in Vietnam and are excited to have fix-

(story continues)

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

National Power Corp. effective rates
(June 2003 to June 2004, in pesos per kilowatt hour)



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Higher subscriber base seen raising Globe profit to ₱14B

By Clarissa S. Batino

GLOBE Telecom Inc. is expected to ride the momentum of its increased subscriber take-up in the second quarter to post a ₱14-billion net income for the year, according to UBS Investment Philippines Inc.

Robust subscriber growth in the second quarter prompted UBS Investment to project that by the end of the year, 37.5 percent of the country's 83 million people would own mobile phones, up from a previous penetration forecast of 35.4 percent.

In 2005, the research group said 43.3 percent of the population should be mobile users, growing to 46.3 percent by 2006.

The research firm upgraded its forecast on the company's earnings and share price after the partnership of Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecom said its subscribers have exceeded 16 million as of the end of the first half.

UBS Investment had originally forecast a net income of ₱13.46 billion for Globe from last year's net profit of ₱13.3 billion. In 2006, the research firm said Globe could generate ₱15.24 billion in profits from an earlier projection of ₱15.4 billion.

UBS Investment said that in the second quarter, Globe enlisted more than a million new subscribers.

"This would be Globe's highest and would be just three times the net addition of 277,000 in the first quarter. We think Globe's initiatives to match Smart's more competitive offerings in the prepaid market could finally narrow the substantial net adds gap between the two," UBS Investment said in a study.

The research firm upgraded its stock rating on Globe to "buy" from "hold" after projecting a 21 percent increase in its share price within a 12-month period to ₱1,050 from yesterday's close of ₱820.

UBS Investment head of research Andy Ilano also originally placed Globe's share price target at ₱980.

The company's share price had slumped 4.7 percent this year, compared with a 7 percent gain in the main stock index.

After introducing a service that allowed subscribers to buy phone credits electronically in Mandaluyong, Globe rushed its move to avoid phone credits-to-use another in January, kicking off a massive marketing campaign to win more subscribers than the countrywide and to stop luring subscribers to the competition.

"We think Globe's initiatives are finally bearing fruit," Ilamago said.

Globe said its second quarter results were better compared to the first quarter this year and the second quarter of 2003 as increased subscriber take-up drove sales and earnings higher.

The company said it already had more than 3,000 cellular sites as of the first half and the rollout of 500 million more would be completed during the remaining months of the year. Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. could accommodate 16 million subscribers.

"The second quarter results were better in all aspects. Globe is a leader by company in the second quarter, in terms of subscriber growth. Here is a significant steady net addition during the second quarter than the first quarter," said Globe president Fernando Zobel de Ayala.

MESTLE BAGS GOLD FOR ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMS

Nestle Philippines Inc. won the Gold award during the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC) International General Meeting-Environment Award Presentation held recently at the Novotel Peco Beijing Hotel in China. Six of the judges from PBEC hailed the company's environmental efforts in the food and agricultural sectors. Nestle Philippines Inc. managing director-executive vice president John F. Jaunap stressed the company's commitment to environmental protection and preservation. "These programs have helped make environmental protection a part of the company's mindset, embedded in our corporate way of life." Nestle corporate environmental officer Jose Reyes and Jaunap (3rd-5 and 4th-5 from left, respectively) pose with PBEC officials and other awardees at the ceremony.

Stock conversion saves Piltel ₱2.7B in dividends

FILIPINO Telephone Corp. has been spared from paying out about ₱2.7 billion in dividends to holders of its convertible preferred shares, giving the company another opportunity to improve its bottom line.

In a disclosure to the stock exchange yesterday, Piltel said that as of June 30, it had issued a 59.3-million share of convertible preferred Series E.

"As of that date, the cumulative dividends accruing on those shares which has not been declared or paid was ₱2.689 billion," Piltel said in its disclosure.

Piltel posted a net income of ₱8 million in the first quarter after incurring billions of pesos in losses in the last seven years.

On July 2, Senior Communications Inc. bought 59.3 million Series E preferred Piltel shares from Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. for ₱2,668 billion. The convertible preferred shares are equivalent to about 47 percent in Piltel. Smart had already converted about 4.8 million shares to own 52.7 percent of Piltel.

With the ongoing conversion of the 59.3 million Series E shares into more than 10 billion common shares, the dividend liability would be removed.

"The accrued dividends would be extinguished upon the conversion of the Series E into common shares. That was the agreement based on the last time we discussed it," said Piltel's corporate information officer Deborah Ilan.

Ilamago, for his part, did not spend a centavo to buy the 59.3 million Series E Piltel shares. The company used more than ₱2 billion in interconnection receivables from PLDT to pay for the convertible preferred shares.

"Given this, Smart issued no acknowledgement or payment other than a memo stating to Smart that PLDT had been credited to the extent of the amount of the purchase price," Piltel noted in its disclosure.

"PLDT owes Smart a lot for interconnection. There would be some form of offsetting," said PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan in an earlier interview.

Smart's receivables from PLDT due to interconnection were "over ₱3 billion," according to Ramon Isberto, head of Smart's corporate affairs.

Clarissa S. Batino

NOTICE OF AUCTION

Please be informed that Camp John Hay Golf Club, Inc. will be holding an **Auction Sale of Delinquent Membership Certificates** on :

6 August 2004
Friday, 10:00 A.M.
At the Kamia Function Room
Edsa, Shangrila Hotel, Mandaluyong City

- *Registration starts at 9:00 A.M. and ends at 10:00 A.M.*

For further inquiries and updates, you may contact (074) 444 2232-33 from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

For the Board of Governors

Atty. Ma. Rumalda M. Bongcaras
Corporate Secretary

Ayala Land seen posting mild 2nd quarter gain

AYALA Land Inc., the country's biggest property developer, is set to post higher profits in the second quarter as it rides on upturns in the country's long-dormant real estate market, analysts said.

The company known for its upscale shopping centers, high-rise condominiums and office buildings, should stay on track to post a full-year profit of around ₱5 billion, up 11 percent from 2003, they said.

One analyst from a foreign brokerage house said Ayala is expected to report a second-quarter profit of more than ₱1 billion to ₱1.2 billion, while others reported milder growth in what is usually a quiet quarter for real estate.

"First quarter and second quarter are usually not impressive. I see a mild, single digit growth in the first half," said Alfred Ira, a property analyst at Philippine Equity Partners.

"Typically, the fourth quarter is the strongest due to a pick-up in retail sales. Also, that's the time when property transactions are usually closed."

Ayala Land, once-thrift owned by the country's largest conglomerate Ayala Corp., will announce its first half results on July 29.

In net profit grew 11 percent in the first quarter to ₱526 million. It had a net profit of ₱952 million in April to June last year, which brought its first half net income to ₱1.1 billion.

Reuters Estimates forecast Ayala Land's full year net income to reach ₱5.01 billion, 11 percent higher from 2003's ₱4.71 billion.

"I am confident that Ayala Land will meet our own full-year target of ₱5.5 billion," said Ira.

The country's seventh-biggest stock with a market capitalization of more than ₱53 billion, Ayala Land's performance in the average even in the 1980s into the Makati Financial Hub, the city's premiere shopping and business district.

Jaime Ayala, the newly appointed 42-year old president of Ayala Land, told Reuters in an exclusive interview that while the sector's recovery might not be as bright as in the years after the Asian crisis, there were reasons to be optimistic.

The Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, a state agency, said land development licenses approved rose in nearly 14 percent year on year to 46,877 units at the end of the first quarter.

All residential, except high-rise residential and commercial condominiums posted a year-on-year expansion.

The company president also said there were more reservations for retail space in Ayala's now shopping centers after the Mitx Ilamago opened.

There is a big backlog of housing demand and a lucrative market outside the Philippines as the eight million overseas Filipinos who are escaping an hoping of workforce at home.

Ayala Land's new projects include expansion of its Greenbelt shopping center in Makati and a bargain-shopping center called Market! Market! into Bonifacio development on a 330-hectare former military base in the capital.

The company also launched Serendra, a ₱6-billion mixture residential community in the Bonifacio development.

Reuters

SMC breaks ground . . .

(See opened up San Miguel to new horizons in terms of both our products and reach."

SMC earlier signed an agreement with property firm Ahtna (Vietnam) Co. Ltd. to allow it to put up a beverage facility in Vietnam. A business license from the Dong Nai Industrial Zones Authority was issued last October.

SMC's investment in Vietnam will allow the company to cash in on Vietnam's expected robust economic growth.

Aside from Vietnam, SMC has facilities and operations in China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Vietnam and Australia.

SMC aims to be among Asia's top 10 food and beverage firms by 2007, Ilamago said on last.

SMC already identified seven countries as part of its regional expansion in the Asia-Pacific region. These are in Indonesia, Vietnam, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Australia, initially committing $1.66 million by end-expansion.

As proof to its growing business, SMC broke ground for a new beverage manufacturing facility in Indonesia this month.

The new crude product beverage plant that will be put up is located on the 800,000 Industrial City in Bekasi, West Java, 26 kilometers from Jakarta.

The new company that will own the facility is PT San Miguel Indonesia Pasific and Beverages. PT San Miguel Indonesia will be 85-percent owned by SMC and 15 percent by PT Delta Djakarta Tbk, SMC's brewery in Indonesia.

The new plant will involve manufacturing and distribution of ready-to-drink soft beverages.

DISCLOSURES

GLOBAL Equities Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 28, 9 a.m. at the Manila Polo Club, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of July 26 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

PHILBEST INC. Bank disclosed that the position of the following officers: A. Benedicto Ramos, executive vice president; Laura Jocson, senior vice president and trust officer; Manolo Hilario, SVP and treasurer; Romulo Santos Jr., SVP and senior credit officer; Gregorio Veran, first vice president and division head; Felipe Cuña, first VP and corporate secretary; Ramon Santos, SVP; Jose Bagtasos Santos, first VP and assistant treasurer; Rodolfo Martinez, vice president; Legarda Branch: Carmelita Luna, VP; Escolastico branch and Nina Alonzo, AVP and acting compliance officer.

* * *

AYALA Land Inc. will hold an analysts' briefing on July 29, 9 a.m. at the Executive Lounge, 25/F of Tower One, Makati City.

* * *

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp. announced the appointment of Emanuel Reyes as group head of corporate risk management with the following appointments and movements effective August 16. *Compiled by Marites D. Tabuso, PDS Research*

Stocks end higher . . .

(See page B1)

nounces its first half earnings on Aug. 3.

Globe Telecom Inc., jointly owned by conglomerates Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecommunications, rose 0.61 percent or ₱5 to ₱820.

Telecommunications firms are widely expected to announce fine electron-related operating or income results ahead the Dec May 15 national polls pushed second-quarter earnings higher.

PLDT is targeting a net income of up to ₱16 billion this year, we ten ₱15.2 billion in 2003.

Globe Telecom has said it expected 2004 net income to reach ₱15 billion against last year's ₱10.24 billion.

Philippine Telephone Corp. (PLDT), a unit of SMART, also gained 2 centavos to ₱2.22.

Ayala Land Inc., the country's largest property developer, rose 2.77 percent to ₱5.30 on hopes its earnings in the second quarter would benefit from the spike in the country's long dormant real estate market.

The "B" shares of Manila Electric Co., the country's largest power distributor, went against the upward trend as it had 30 centavos or 0.97 to ₱30 after the firm said that while its profits tripled in the first quarter, they were not enough to meet huge debt requirements.

Reuters

Tan-talizing tales

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

New capital standards for broker-dealers readied

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Gov't taps euro bond . . .

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PROMO RUNS FROM JUNE 15-OCT 15, 2004

PRESCRIPTIONS

Bold moves to save ailing power sector

By Francisco L. Viray
Contributor

COMMENTARY

THE DEBUT investments of distribution utilities, rural electric cooperatives and end-user spelled for retail competition must be strengthened. This is the conclusion of investment bankers of leaders.

Private distribution utilities and rural electric cooperatives have been the most proactive in the privatization of the power industry. Acting as middlemen between the generators and the consumers, they end up in the "dilemma" especially when electric bills are high. But their role in attracting new investments in the power generation industry is so pivotal. This is because the distribution utilities are the buyers of power from these new investments.

No independent power producer will put up a new plant for a utility or cooperative that is financially weak. It is therefore the responsibility of the Energy Regulatory Commission to strengthen the distribution balance sheets by providing predictable rulings and policies.

Open access

A reason why the utilities and cooperatives are hesitant to enter into long term bilateral contracts is that because they do not want to take the risk in a retail competition or open access regime. A definite timetable as well as clear and predictable implementing rules and regulations are therefore needed.

Competition rules are required and more qualified for open access to sign contracts with the utilities or cooperatives at least until retail competition begins. End users who do not sign beyond this period may be deemed to have opted to become contestable markets and therefore cannot obligate the utilities and cooperatives to serve them once retail competition sets in.

The said contracts should enable the utilities and cooperatives to sign long-term contracts with IPPs because they can already predict their captive market. With this, the utilities and cooperatives can then remove the risk-premium of demand of these end-users from their profile and, thus, they will no longer need to contract the said volume with the IPPs. The distribution utilities will have no more reason to use retail competition and open access as scapegoats for not taking on the responsibility for their own long-term power supply requirements.

Likewise, for the distributors to be competitive in a retail competition, all forms of subsidies must be removed from the generation and supply businesses and the National Transmission Co. or Transco charges.

Regulatory issues

Investors are also facing risks arising from regulations and government policies. Thus, they need clear, predictable and sustainable national and local government policies, as well as investor-friendly regulation.

Today, we are faced with a number of regulatory issues that are both controversial and politically volatile. This is compounded by the specter of Supreme Court decisions that invalidate regulatory governance.

For example, the take-or-bandling, which under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) was intended to make sure arming arrangements has generated more questions and controversial issues than answers.

For Epira to be successful, the ERC needs to function as it was designed to be—a truly independent quasi-judicial body manned by competent regulators willing to take a stand within the separate limits different sectors. The ERC will have to balance the interests of both the industry players and the consumers.

But if consumers and industry players do not trust the ERC or the regulatory environment and would ask the court to intervene in all issues of this adjustment, there are doubts ready to accept the fact that power shortages will always loom in the horizon. It will discourage investors wanting to a stagnant economy with the poor getting poorer.

While the Epira will loosen the government's role in the industry, it is still imperative for the government to create a "watchdog" policy that will spur the development of indigenous fuels.

Market forces may not be enough to spur exploration and development of indigenous fuels. Thus, the government has to give the necessary push through clear policy directions and more incentives to lessen the country's dependence on imported fuels.

Rough sailing

Today, we are still going through rough seas as the Epira is being bogged down by current regulatory issues and strong populist clamor.

Its implementation is held hostage by "public opinion" on the following issues: IPP contract review; Meralco income tax refund; SC ruling on ERC's decision on Transco's rates like income tax, provisional authority on rate to consumers; ERC decisions on ERAM and lease and, consumers' perception of high power rates.

However, these issues must not be used as excuses to delay or prevent the implementation of Epira because, except for the Meralco refund, they will all be resolved with the proper and timely implementation of the law.

Real government failure, the bullet and implemented Epira properly even at the height of the IPP controversy, we will already be reaping the benefits of this law today. But since we did not, our window of opportunity is, as expected, the industry has been ordered four times to leave power. Of these four years, the transition period is about two to three years. The question is: are we willing to face head on the new law in these tough years ahead of us? Or do we set aside Epira and continue operating our current mess and let Napocor keep on borrowing until we default on our obligations and have our own financial crisis?

Real hurdle

Ironically, the real impact of artificially low power rates in the long term are higher power rates and inevitable power interruptions. This discourages investors to come to the Philippines and consequently, limiting economic opportunities for our Filipinos in our own country. And sadly if politics and populist decisions take precedence, then we will be holed up forever in an era of artificially low power rates but high cost of power interruptions, operations and maintenance, which will all be shouldered by the taxpayers. But worst of all, we will plunge into a debilitating debt crisis.

The choice for government policy makers is either to continue subsidizing power rates of Napocor until it defaults on its obligations, or to brave for the tough road ahead and convince the public to bear with the birth pains of Epira before reaping its full benefits in about five years. The rules are sustainable, affordable, regionally competitive power rates, and a vibrant and healthy power industry.

Therefore, I submit that power rates need to be increased before it can actually go down. Why? Once power rates are increased to income market levels, then new investments will come in and Napocor can be successfully privatized. This will not only solve a looming power shortage, it will also create an environment of a stable power supply that will give stimulus to the economy.

Injecting competition

Under such an environment, we can now address the problems of electricity rates for the long-term by injecting competition with IPPNAP. This will increase installed capacities, lower the reserve requirements because of supply availability and efficiency which will lead to reduced generation costs.

Aside from reducing power rates, competition encourages the offering of more value-added services to those paying the full cost of their electric consumption.

Other regulatory reforms that can further lower power costs can then be easily implemented. These include the Administered Based Regulation (PBR) for monopoly businesses of the industry mandating low reduction programs by Transco, IEA and ERC's.

The ERC can also participate in Epira's future growth of the industry through carefully crafted policies on the optimal expansion of transmission grids and sub-transmission and distribution systems, power generation capacity and use of indigenous and renewable resources.

Until all these recommendations, the administration will have a lot on its hands. Time is of the essence. Hopefully it will not be too late.

(The author is former president of Napocor and energy secretary. Napocor chair.)

Logistics firm sees 50% sales growth

By Darlene S. Basbas

TNT Express Worldwide Philippines said its sales in the first half of the year grew by 50 percent, due to improving logistics and courier operations.

"We are having a good year. Growth is coming from even across the logistics business, which involves us in helping companies manage their supply chain, and the express or courier side," TNT president and country general manager Jose Luis Romero Soto.

But Soto said he could not disclose absolute sales figures as the logistics business was "very sensitive." He said that in mid-June 2003, revenue was up by only 30 percent.

He said TNT would continue to develop the logistics and courier business in the Philippines as well as in neighboring countries. In China, he said the company had plans to build a road and air network to get a bigger share of the huge market.

In Southeast Asia, TNT covers Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand as its major business centers.

The company's Manila operations started in 1982. It occupies a 4,000-square-meter space as a prime cargo center adjacent to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. The site has an area of 4,000 square meters. The site has also a warehouse area of 600 square meters.

TNT Philippines employs nearly 200 people, utilizes 50 vehicles and has bookings on at least 115 flights per week. Its satellite offices are located in Makati City and Laguna, and another depot is located in Cebu.

Increase in oil prices unlikely, group says

By Abigail L. Ho

PRICES of petroleum products are not expected to increase anytime soon.

This despite the signing of an executive order raising tariffs on crude and refined petroleum product imports to 3 percent from 3 percent, according to Consumer and Oil Price Watch chairman Raul T. Concepcion.

Concepcion said retail prices were not likely to increase until next month as local firms have not yet reflected the decline in crude oil prices in their refinery pump prices.

Thus, they could absorb the increase in costs resulting from the implementation of the EO.

"Even if the price of Dubai crude has increased by $2 per barrel as of July 23 as compared to June and if the peso depreciated by 8 centavos, the rollback which the oil companies owe the consumers will be used to offset the price increase," he said in a statement yesterday.

President Macapagal-Arroyo signed an EO increasing the tariff on crude and petroleum to 3 percent, from 3 percent.

The new EO, however, would not be implemented until international prices start to soften, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez said in an earlier briefing.

The price level that would "trigger" the implementation of the new EO was still being determined by the Departments of Energy and Trade and Industry and the National Economic and Development Authority.

But militant party list group Bayan Muna called the new EO a "midnight legislation."

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño said Malacañang should not have rushed the approval of the new EO when there really was no need to implement it.

"Malacañang should have just waited three more days and simply included the oil tariff hike as one of **love legislator proposals**," he said in a separate statement.

15% power rate discount for MRT-3, LRT sought

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation said Tuesday it would ask Manila Electric Co. to grant a 15- percent discount on the power purchases of Metro Rail Transit 3 and the Light Railway Transit Authority.

"Either that or the department will negotiate with independent power producers for cheaper power," an official of the department said.

Transportation Assistant Secretary Jaderito Cusumano said the cost of electricity accounted for about 30 percent of the operating costs of the railway systems.

At present, MRT and LRT get their power supply exclusively from Meralco.

Among the measures being considered to lower their power costs is to negotiate for a discount either with Meralco or the IPPs, said Cusumano.

The government currently provides some P6b- million to P6b million is incredibly unlikely to MRT alone.

MRT 3 and the LRTA are awaiting Malacañang's approval of a P1.5 fare hike to help them meet the increasing costs of operations.

MRT-3 operates the Metrobus Express and pays a monthly lease to a private consortium called Metro Rail Transit Corp. The transactions is led by the Hi-Jin Jet Group owned by the Schnoppe family.

MRT-3 general manager Roberto Lastimoso said the government was paying P1bb million in monthly lease to the consortium but with the current fare structure, it was collecting only about P1b3 million monthly from about 400,000 Metrobus commuters.

LRT administrator Pacifico Fajardo said that the LRT has about P6bb- million in the first half of the year because of the huge subsidies being poured exclusively into its new line, the LRT 2, which runs from Santa to Manila.

Under the build, lease and transfer arrangement, the government must pay the MRTC sometimes a total of $2.1 billion over 25 years.

The government is obliged to pay MRTC about $28 million this year, $38 million next year and $39 million in 2006. The annual payment will increase to $118.33 millionin 2018.

From MRT-3's collections, the transportation department must make rental payments to the private sector group in favor of shareholi, the DOTC uses a sound-by lease of roads from Philippine National Bank to settle the dues. The MRTC is pressing for the payment of past due receivables from MRT3.

"It's about time we increase the rates to lessen government subsidy, which is P5 per passenger. We are losing P1 million a day," said Lastimoso. He informed that there would be a 2-percent drop in ridership from the current 400,000 daily average if the fare hike would be implemented.

But despite the projected decline in volume, MRT3 expects to increase its profit with the fare adjustment. This year, the railway system is expected to register about P2.1 billion in earnings if Malacañang would approve its petition for the fare adjustment.

Lastimoso said the 12-percent projected increase in revenue already took into account the anticipated 2-percent decline in ridership.

Both the LRTA and MRT3 cited the increased costs of maintenance and electricity as the main reasons for the fare hike.

Income from operating the railway, according to government sources, is not enough to cover the costs of maintenance.

LRTA runs Line 1 spanning Monumento to Baclaran and Line 2 stretching from Recto to Pasig to Legarda in Marikina.

RP eyes deals as EU extends poultry ban

THE EUROPEAN Union's decision to extend a ban on poultry from several Asian nations is likely to provide an opportunity to the Philippines to sell some surpluses to that region, a senior trade official said on Tuesday.

The EU on Monday extended until Dec. 15 its ban on chicken products and pet birds from other Asian countries—Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Pakistan, China, South Korea, and Vietnam—due to the perennially deadly bird flu.

The ban had been due to expire on Aug. 15.

"It's fine but will of course provide an opportunity to look at more Europeans markets," said Rafael Buenaf, chair of the Poultry Export Board, a body jointly set up by the government and the industry to oversee export operations.

Thailand, the world's fourth biggest chicken exporter in 2003, confirmed a new outbreak of the disease on July 3, prompting the cull of almost 200,000 fowl. The virus has recorded in 18 of Thailand's 76 provinces to current records.

China and Indonesia have also reported new cases recently but say their outbreaks are under control.

Poland said the industry was seeing some respiration from the European Union but declined to give specific details.

The Philippines, which restricted free of bird flu earlier this year and also during the current outbreak, has been exporting poultry products to some Asian nations such as Japan.

Malaysia is the other key Asian poultry producer that remained free from bird flu that spread across Asia earlier this year, billing at least 20 people.

"Two companies are getting regular orders from Japan," Pascual said however, he was referring to San Miguel Foods Inc.,—a unit of Philippine food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., and Universal Robina Inc.

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"Two companies are getting regular orders from Japan," Pascual said however, he was referring to San Miguel Foods Inc.,—a unit of Philippine food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., and Universal Robina Inc.

Farm groups cite agri sector gains

MYRBAL large farmers organizations lauded the continuing increase in the country's rice and corn harvests, saying the trend "has helped improve the lives of farmers and has created about 1.79 million additional jobs in the countryside."

The groups cited an earlier report by Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. which showed that the country was expected to harvest records in rice and corn harvests due to increased farm support programs and the promotion of hybrid rice and corn varieties.

Lorenzo reported that rice production this year was expected to reach a record 14.28 million metric tons (MT), up by 6 percent from last year's 13.5 million MT. Corn harvest is expected to reach 5.3 million MT, up by more than 30 percent from last year's record of 4.6 million MT.

Mindanao farmer leader Ferdinand Umaigan, president of Mindanao Association of Cooperatives (Mafecoop), said the record harvests showed "that an agriculture sector leadership that combines hands-on farm experience and international management caliber can help the country move closer to food self-sufficiency."

Umaigan said the harvests last year could reach 6.1 million MT. Before this point, he added, The country used to import 2 million metric tons of rice to meet its minimum requirements in three lean years.

Benjamin Lorenzi, president of Federation of Irrigators Associations in Nueva Ecija, said Lorenzo's actual farming experience and management capabilities "have helped the Arroyo administration to craft agricultural programs and policies that respond to the farmers' needs and aspirations."

ECONOMIC FORUM

Investor Secretary Angelo Reyes (second from left) discusses the government's role and investor prospects during the monthly Economic Corporate Network's (ECN) Philippine Business Leaders Forum at the Polo Club with PBLF panelists Bruce McClennan Nilson, managing director of Group 4 Falck; Pulsar International chair and ECN vice chair Joey Lantion; PBLF panelist Craig Boerners, and ECN chair Michael Elenzo.

1st Asian Stratmark Student Competition Winners

Ateneo de Manila University bested other schools in the 1st Asian Strategic Marketing Competition, a nationwide case defense team competition organized by the Philippine Marketing Association held recently at the Philippine International Convention Center.

Other entrants were University of Santo Tomas and University of the Philippines Visayas, which received the first and second runner-up awards respectively.

Endorsed by the Commission on Higher Education, the Asian Stratmark which was also part of the National Marketing Month celebration, provided a venue for students to sharpen their in-depth analysis of marketing issues through case contests, exercise strategic thinking through environment and alternative creation of action and showcase their skills in presentation and quick thinking through a case defense.

Regional winners included ADMU, De La Salle-Manila, DLSU, UP-Diliman and Far Eastern University from the NCR; DLSU-Dasmariñas, Holy Lunet, UP-Iloilo, Holy Visayas and Ateneo de Davao University; MSU-IIT, Xlpan and Xavier University from Cagayan de Oro.

Teams selected for the final round comprised of five to eight marketing and/or business management students who made a 20-minute presentation of their strategic marketing plans with 2nd5bo as their assigned case study. They also went through a 20-minute Q&A with the board of judges.

Panel of judges included Philippine Marketing Association president Joe Ortega; Jasmin Bonag, Mercedonia's vice president for marketing services; Richard Yang, managing director of Catalyst Inc.; Jodi Galiares, GMA Kiss Media president; Renato Arienza, SVP for marketing and sales of the Philippine Daily Inquirer; and Francisco Cola, marketing manager of Globe Corp.

Meanwhile over 1,000 marketing students all over the country and the neighboring countries trooped to the PICC to attend the first-ever Joint Stratmark Convention which was held concurrent with the competition.

This learning event brought marketing education to higher levels as runners-up students being hooked up to the business industry shared insights on how to make it big in the local and international fronts of the marketing field.

Portia Ani, president and founder of Figure Coffee Inc., encouraged participants in her talk entitled "Take Your Dream For a Ride." Roland Ringuet of Dakila Arts Inc. spoke on "Marketing In The Bible Economy." Joy Aldeguer, president of Island Treasure tackled "Globalizing a Local Brand." Dr. Leonardo Garcia, the secretary-general of the Asia Pacific Marketing Federation discussed "E-marketing in the 21st Century."

Meanwhile, Joe Ortega presented the one-liter ink of the World in the convention.

According to Arian Hernando convention director Ricky de Vera, participants not only had the opportunity to listen to a multiple selection of top-of speakers, but also got to mingle with students from other schools and share marketing excellence experiences.

Student winners with the Stratmark Competition committee and board of judges.

1st Runner-up Student Competition team Ateneo de Manila University with (from left) Richard Yang of Catalyst, chairman of the board of judges Edwin Hernando of Apollo, Alcala, chair of 1st National Collegiate Marketing Festival, UPSC Student Academe and PMA president Joe Ortega.

2nd runner-up UP Diliman with (from left) Richard Yang, Paulino Dimagiba Jr. advisor, Ruby Barrameda, Edwin Hernandez, Jose Reyes and Joe Ortega.

2nd runner-up UP Visayas with (from left) Richard Yang, Paulino Dimagiba Jr. advisor, Ruby Barrameda, Edwin Hernandez, Jose Reyes and Joe Ortega.

New PDIC charter OKd

By Doris C. Dumlao

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday signed into law the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.'s new charter, which restored the agency's authority to examine banks and raised the minimum deposit insurance coverage to P250,000 from P100,000.

The new PDIC charter, known as Republic Act No. 9302, will take effect on Aug. 12. It is expected to benefit the country's 26 million depositors.

In a statement yesterday, PDIC said the new charter provided deposit insurance protection that exceed 2.5 times more than the present insurance coverage.

"The law will now provide full protection to some 96 percent of deposit accounts compared to 93 percent under the previous ceiling of P100,000," the PDIC said.

As a result of higher maximum deposit insurance coverage, the PDIC estimated that insured deposits in the banking system had increased from P683 billion to P717 billion.

"Almost all or 99 percent of deposits insured in the rural banks will be backed by full insurance protection, from 97 percent at previous insurance coverage," it said.

"For thrifts banks, 96 percent of their deposit accounts will be fully insured, up from 91 percent under the old limit," it added.

Some 93 percent of deposit accounts in commercial banks will likewise be fully insured, an improvement from the 90 percent under the old limit.

"Aside from the higher level of protection, the new law is also expected to instill greater financial discipline among bank owners and officials due to stiffer penalties for unsafe and unsound practices of up to 12 years in prison and a maximum of P2 million in fines," the PDIC said.

"The measure is also expected to lower the probability of more of our countrymen going through the pains, troubles, opportunity losses, and confidence erosion associated with bank closures," it stressed.

The new law also mandated every deposition of continued protection through deposit insurance, as PDIC's authority to terminate the insurance status of banks, even those with delinquent premium payments, had been avoided. Thus, depositors would not have to worry whether their banks were paying PDIC the appropriate amounts of premiums or not.

Instead, the responsibility was shifted to the officers and owners of banks as they would be liable to stiff fines and penalties for non-payment.

But with the higher coverage, coupled with the new responsibility of banning examiners even for delinquent banks, the PDIC said there was much greater risk posed on the deposit insurance fund.

Thus, the law reinstated PDIC's capability to minimize risks to the insurance fund by restoring PDIC's authority to examine banks with prior approval of the Monetary Board to avoid duplication of work.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 2004
2bU LIFESTYLE

PHASE 11 ADS BALL
JULY 30, 2004

Color of money

Money, money, money! Lack of it is a blight, too much of it is a curse. 2bU! shows how money makes the teen world go 'round, and how it changes everything

VALEDICTORIAN BREAKTHROUGH
Powermemory
Oxygen for Learning

Banking 101

It's never too early—or late—to begin saving and making your money grow

By Maal V. Reyes
2bU Correspondent

TIP: In one, your parents once opened a savings account for you when you were a kid, urging you to deposit all your birthday and Christmas money "for a rainy day."

But of course, how could a 7-year-old who only really wanted a Multo Barbie doll grasp the concept of saving, where all she got in return was a bare-looking booklet with random numbers on it?

We're hoping you're congruent that phrase. Your parents may still be nagging you to save some of your allowance in a bank than spend it on the latest Sugarbun CD and they're right, because it's about time you finally grasped the concept of saving. And we're not talking about keeping it in a cookie jar.

To be honest, you should be ashamed if you still have a piggy bank sitting on top of your shelf. But there's hope for you yet. 2bU! will walk you through the wonderful world of banking, from saving techniques to the different products available for you and your hard-earned cash.

The skinny on savings

The basic concept of saving should start early on. Obviously, if you never brought up to think money grows on trees, you'll spend like you own a forest.

It doesn't mean you can't kick the habit, though. Setting aside about 15 percent of your income or allowance should produce a hefty sum by the end of the year, and learning to actually keep track of your expenses can make a huge difference. And, of course, let's not forget about resisting impulsive purchases. Thinking three times if you really, really need that item can do wonders to your wallet.

It all boils down to one thing: discipline. It's not the end that matters, but your actual willpower to set aside a certain amount of money. One of the many reasons some teenagers find it awkward to save is they think P1,000 is such a small amount of money and isn't worth putting away.

When you do finally fight the urge to spend it all on a new pair of shoes, stop yourself from anything it is in a box and locking it under your bed. The whole point of saving is to make your money grow...and the only

NOSE LIFT & BUST LIFT
The Alpha Way
COSMETIC SURGERY BY QUALIFIED SURGEON
DIAMOND PEEL SERVICE
Alpha
CENTER FOR HEALTH & BEAUTY

THE CAST

ADVERTISING GIANT
Joy Arellano, 20, BJ, advertising student and varsity soccer player

PHOTOGRAPHER EXTRAORDINAIRE
Ryan Fernandez, Visual Arts student, Fordham University

ACTION STAR/ OLYMPIC MEDALIST
Jayne Lizardo, Philippine Taekwondo Team member, commercial model and DLSU sports studies student

SUPERMODEL OF THE WORLD
Alex Tirante, ACSAD, European Studies sophomore and model

TALK SHOW HOST/COMEDIAN
Chelo Papa, UP Broadcast Communication student and musician

MULTI-AWARDED FILM DIRECTOR
Red Dimbaloso, UP Film student and musician

SPORTS STAR/ PRODUCT ENDORSER
James Zaldivar, former FEU Tamaraw forward and model

Dreaming of fame and fortune

Text and Styling by Bianca Caesanji, Sameera Dani Beltran and Cheryl Tiu
DLSU Correspondents
Photos by Patrick Pastrana

EVERYBODY wants to become rich and famous. Who doesn't dream of having all the money in the world or the solution of millions?

To celebrate our yearning for the finer things in life, DLSU gathered seven dreamers from modeling fields, dressed them up in fine Rustan suits and elegant threads, and asked them how they intended to turn their dreams into reality.

Q&A: If you had a million dollars, what would you do?

Janeen Zaldivar (JZ): I'd give it to Bimbo Oh to help him pay the Philippine debt. Or he can use it to pay his psychologist. It's his option, of course.

Red Dimbaloso (RD): Do pretty much do everything that I've always dreamed of, like being a bum, traveling the world, eating nonstop, hiking, drinking, surfing and making good films. And of course, I'd pay half of it to charity.

Joy Arellano (JAr): The first thing I'd buy is a lot where I would build a house for me and my family. Then I'd buy myself a superbike, because I've always dreamt of having my own motorcycle. The money I have left will be put to the bank for safekeeping.

Jayne Lizardo (JL): I would donate some to charity, maybe to our church and some orphanages. I'd also use some to put up a business, maybe a gym. I'd give a lot to my family and then I'll save the rest in the bank for my future.

Alex Tirante (AT): I would go shopping, travel a lot, go to the salon and spa regularly. Finance my education and buy my own flat.

Ryan Fernandez (RF): I would divide it in to two: save the first half in a bank for retirement, then invest the second half in various enterprises.

Chelo Papa (CP): I would start a laundry business. Marketing turned magkalo. (Laughs)

Q&A: How are you with money—do you spend more or save more?

JZ: I save a lot for my... I mean my future. I want to have my own family someday, but my girl and I have decided to wait a little longer until we're 30.

RD: Actually I'm both a savings and a splurger. I usually don't buy stuff for myself unless I really have to, but on the other hand, I'm pretty keen with my money when it comes to my friends and my significant other.

JAr: Minsan ine I have money, I always try to set aside some money so I can put it in my savings. But usually I end up going through my savings and using it anyway. I try my best to save more than to spend, but it usually happens the other way around!

JL: I don't really spend a lot, but I spend on things that I do need or relate my family needs. Admittedly, I do buy a lot of shirts sometimes. I go out. When I see a nice shirt, I buy it. There are things that I want to buy, but I end up not having them because I know it's not practical.

LOOKS can be deceiving, Angelo Sierra, you good members, we shall see.

THE BRAT pack and their wives

CHAMPAGNE dreams

JZ: Hopefully, I can go back to playing basketball. then I'll save and invest the money in, let's see, which I will have apartments built to generate my additional income. I'll probably get into business as well.

RD: By conserving a relentless green. Just kidding, actually I don't know. I aspire to do a lot of things to make me rich, such as writing a best-selling novel, or becoming a rock star, or making a criminally unclaimed movie or documentary. So it's either I do one of those, or maybe I'll just do all of them for fun.

JAr: The first thing I'll do is to start my own business in the food industry. Because I love to eat, and with the money from that, I'll invest in stocks...

JL: Finish my studies, get a job, put up a business and maybe become an action star. (Laughs)

AT: I would strive to become a top model. That way I get my share of fame and fortune.

RF: Make a lot of paintings, take my own death and reap the money in a posthumous artist.

CP: I'd take the advice of well-meant million-aires' fans, 10 percent of profits, buy real estate and diversify my investments.

Email the authors and models at bianca.k@hotmail.com, s_d_t_r_m_@hotmail.com, cheryl_tiu@yahoo.com.ph

MASTERMIND: Thinking of his next move

THE TEMPTRESS on the lookout

ALL'S well after a hard day's work...

Banking 101

From page B1

only. It will grow to it if you either put it in a bank or invest.

Savings and certificates of deposit

Before you're one of those bankrate.com addicts who stay up until 3 a.m. researching the latest news, stock market, don't even think about investing in stocks right away. We're still trying to get over your piggy-bank habit, remember?

The first thing you want to do is pick a bank. And unless you've subdued your kiddie savings account to buy that Barbie doll, then you've pretty much set. If not, open an account in a well-trusted bank that you have quick access to. Well-trusted because this is your money we're talking about, and quick access because you wouldn't want to take a 20-minute trip to see your banker every day, right?

Now what kind of account you select depends on how much moolah you have in your hands right now. Obviously, P1,000 can't get you a checking account, much less a credit card. So beginners, there are two types of account that you can open: A savings account and a time deposit.

A savings account is the most basic of all. The best part is that you can withdraw your money any time. The downside is, the interest you earn something to cheer about (in case you were asleep during economics class, bank interest is the money the bank gives you for letting them keep your money for you), and there are no bells or whistles that you have to enjoy.

The minimum for a savings account varies from bank to bank, so do a little shopping to uncover which one gives you the lowest interest rate. Some banks can go for as low as P1,000, while others like Citibank, has a minimum of P100,000 but its unpaid interest rate is a whopping 5 percent if your parents have accounts with Citibank, though, they "treat interbranch balances" would help you open an account.).

Applications for an ATM card is also under a savings account, which means easy withdrawal of money, plus you get to check your balance if you've not heard a passbook.

Time deposits or certificates of deposits offer a slightly higher interest rate than a savings account. The catch is, your money stays with them for a certain time. This is why unlike a savings account, a time deposit can guarantee you a fixed interest rate during that given amount of time (which can range from a month to a year, depending on the bank). You can only withdraw money when your account "matures," that is, when the time is over.

If you do withdraw your money before its maturity date, you pay a hefty penalty. Otherwise, at the end of every term, your account "rolls over"—meaning it continues to another term with a new fixed interest rate.

A credit card is not evil

Once you've started your account and find yourself dropping in the bank to greet the long lines at the teller, you might be tempted to give in to those glossy pamphlets that offer a "higher credit than other banks."

Before you run away in terror screaming that the devil has tempted you yet again, read this: A credit card is not evil. In fact, a credit card can actually help you manage your money better, since you get a statement at the end of every month that tells you where your money went.

Plus, you get to enjoy interest-free credit, meaning you get to buy all the stuff you want and pay the net price when you pay your statement.

A credit card should be looked at as a loan extended to you. Which means you have to learn how to manage it. Solution: signing. (Think how much you can actually pay back.

Once you've established a great relationship with your banker (Tip: give them gifts during the holidays, remember their names and treat them like royalty. Believe us, it does wonders), you may want to begin paying off bills without the hassle of losing. This is where a checking account comes in handy.

A checking account (your little known fact you do have the non-existent of "checking"—due to paying bills with that little slip of paper that has your name on the bottom. You can also keep track of what you're paying off.

Once more with feeling

Now that you've opened your bank account and have established an outstanding rapport with your bank, you might want to stop and remember why you're keeping your money in the bank.

First off, you can't buy a car with money resting under your bed. Setting realistic goals (or for realistic amateurs, and realizing your money goes in a natural ballad but it's the real deal.

Many banks also offer different products that suit your needs. Citibank has its "Citibanking," a needs-based program where you get to consult with your banker and figure out how you're going to get to that goal of yours. (we're talking how much you earn/or save over a given period of time).

Others offer credit cards with discounts at establishments, and easy online banking for those on the go.

And of course, unlike the stock market, banking has fewer risks. While investing is chockie (that is, if you're really, really good at it) can make you a millionaire overnight, it can also drain your account just as quick. Banking offers a safe way for your money to grow, with fewer risks.

There are other accounts available. Our advice? Visit your neighborhood friendly bank and find out what options are open for you.

Hope hopefully your instinct won't have kicking you about carving your own paycheck.

E-mail the author at mercyc@inquirer.com.ph

Savvy saving tips

If you're just like my friend who often finds herself with a bank balance below two digits, you might want to brush up on your saving skills. While it's not exactly rocket science, you will need lots of willpower in order to actually purchase that wrapper-less PC you've had your eye on for ages.

Here are a few things as exacting about saving:

Set realistic goals

The whole point of doing this is to motivate you to save. Don't think of today, think of tomorrow. Where will you be 10 years down the road? What do you think you'll be needing? How much would you require to achieve your goal? Writing down your goals and pinning them in a place where you can see them all the time will make you want to save more.

Remind yourself...

...and the people around you that you're trying to save.

Kick the 'latte budget'

Most of our money actually goes to small, unnecessary things. Ever noticed that sometimes you leave the house with a P500 bill and come back not knowing where everything went?

Most probably, half of that went to unimportant things like a bag of cigarettes. Try to compute how much the many latte you buy in four to six months from a year. That's quite a lot. You kick that habit.

Splurge a little

Just because you're saving doesn't mean you restrict the life of a pauper. It's good to splurge every once in awhile. Think of it as a reward. After you've saved up a certain amount of money, you deserve a little push. But don't spend all your money. Think "little sacrifices will lead to bigger, better things."

Once again, it's all about the discipline. Saving even P100 already puts you ahead of the game. **Grace G. Reyes**

The bag is yours!

CONGRATULATIONS to the first 100 readers who participated in ZBB and Citibank's ultimate money survey. You can claim your prize (choose between the fab backpack and the snazzy body-bag) at the PDI office starting Aug. 7. Look for Joyce Abalos.

1. Pedro Olipid
2. Marie Ann Ebio
3. Ma C. Ramallosa
4. Jenny Lou Colina
5. Annalyn B. Numeron
6. Annalyn B. Asis
7. Juliana B. Bellimer
8. Ms. edelfina G. Ilisi
9. Kathleen Lucero
10. Dominic Bautista
11. Arnaldo B. Ramero, Jr.
12. Ms. Elena Jamon
13. Federico M. Fernandez
14. Andrea Salvacruz
15. Henry Yu
16. Jennifer Michelle Dumas
17. Kiel Bermejo
18. Myra Beltran
19. Ma. Teresa M. Ming
20. O Caringa
21. Genaro Rada
22. Elbert Nebia
23. Reggie Hernandez
24. Mario Ty
25. Ismenal Lenar
26. Lumen Santiago
27. Amado Mier
28. Albet Ocampo
29. Galaxie Dreisenes
30. Muriel Ebuerig
31. Mina Ma. Tuvera
32. Perry Lagera
33. Dalla Magsin
34. Arcee T. Tolosa
35. Melanie Canaria
36. Flora Ritchi Pera
37. Chris Abes
38. Delia Apeller
39. Dennis Ray Rivera
40. Vilma Pacana
41. Arnaldo Bonillo
42. Ric Tumaca
43. Jose de Jesus
44. Sheila Tanares
45. Jaime Teodoro Francisco
46. Michael Degil

THE END !!

Five things you wanted to know about stocks but were too proud to ask

By Vanessa Avellano Doctor
2BU Correspondent

PERHAPS, at one point in your life, you wondered about how to invest in the stock market. And shortly after recognizing that point, you recoiled upon hearing fancy words like securities, shares, equity transactions, bonds and initial public offerings. Eventually you dismissed them as something you didn't really want to know (cough). Right.

Time to swallow your pride and admit curiosity, because learning the basics of trading in stocks is not really that difficult.

Despite the confusing jargon, learning the basics of stock trading is not really that difficult

What are stocks (aka shares or scrips)?

When a person is a shareholder or a stockholder in a firm, that means he is part owner of the company. The amount of control he has over which direction the company takes a direction is by how many shares he owns.

For example, if you have only a 10 percent share in a company, while your two partners each have 45 percent, they have greater decision-making powers than you.

You may purchase stocks through an accredited trading participant in the Philippine Stock Exchange and may only do so if the company you are eyeing is listed in the PSE. Also, you will need an authorized broker to handle your stocks, as the PSE does not directly transact in buying and selling with investors.

The minimum amount which can be considered as an initial investment when buying stocks is known as a board price and a designated number of shares, as shown on the Board Lot table at the trading hall. Stock trading at the PSE happens on weekdays from 9:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Who are the market players?

The people involved in stock trading are the general public (the investors), the listed companies, the trading participants (brokers and other personnel), investment houses, underwriters, clearing agencies (where investors are credited), central depository (which transfers ownership from one investor to another through a computerized system) and the investment clearing company.

What are the merits of investing in stocks?

First is company ownership. As a shareholder, you will be able to vote and have a say in crucial decisions by the firm, as well as earn dividends (or bonuses) distributed by the company when profits are updating. You earn partial ownership of the remaining assets of the company in the event of liquidation (which usually happens when it shuts down).

Second is the easier access to funds. Those who invest in stocks can start with as low as P1,000, depending on what is stated on the Board Lot, and decide to cash the investments any time during trading hours.

Third is the opportunity to earn. When the company performs well, during the years, shareholders are awarded bonuses. In addition, investors who bought shares at a low price in a company that eventually did well and raised its share value may sell their shares at the prevailing price and profit from them.

How safe and secure are these investments?

The PSE's Floor Trading and Monitoring Committee regulates activities within the trading floor and monitors all transactions, to make sure every party complies with the mandated set of rules. It is responsible for recommending and overseeing settlement guidelines and the trading behavior of brokering personnel.

In addition to this, you should also make sure the broker you hire is in good standing with the PSE. That is, he is somebody you can trust with your money, and who has the time to analyze market movements and is competent enough to make important decisions as to where your money should be placed.

What does it mean when companies "go public"?

Going public means giving up full private ownership of a company and opening up shareholding opportunities to whoever is interested in the trading floor.

When a firm goes public through an initial public offering (also called a float), this means that it has decided to list in the PSE in order to raise more capital at a cost-efficient manner.

Companies often choose to list to reduce dependence on traditional financing sources, such as banks and individuals, by bringing down the burden of spending for the owner and sharing it with other investors. It allows firms to fund expansions without having to exhaust private outlets.

There are many other things we need to know about trading on the stock exchange, and there are more hazy words we need to understand. That is about as elementary as we can get. If you do decide to invest your money in stocks, from all the stocks of the trade fairs and outside with those who know best.

The Philippine Stock Exchange operates out two trading floors, one at the PSE Tower in Ortigas, Pasig City, and the other at the PSE Plaza in Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Visit the website at www.pse.com.ph and have a good time maneuvering all those words.

E-mail the author at vma_doctor@yahoo.com

The bag is yours!

From page 22

47. Dave Lopez
48. Ariel Calupig
49. Romana Aclan
50. Stephanie Santiago-Castillo
51. Josef Wenceslao
52. Irene M. Polines
53. Magnolia F. Swanepol
54. Ervilo C. Andaya
55. Gina Bulaon
56. Jose E. Alphonso
57. Ryan Rocha
58. April Mae Manuzuriel
59. Dolores E. Dandis
60. Genevieve Lim
61. Doris Tan
62. Manny Landicho, Jr.
63. Joy Abigail de Dios
64. Alfredo Torres
65. Trishi Lourdes Ong
66. Irene Sale
67. Kristine Yvette C. Go
68. Nestor S. Taverros
69. Marie Kristine Sera-Jose
70. Cherry Pasigui
71. Lee Javellana
72. Beverly Go
73. Jhoeli Quigui
74. Shellyn Pablo
75. Alan J. Cuerva
76. Rey E. Peñamante
77. Benjamin Arellano
78. Hazel Faye Tolentino
79. Louise Tan
80. Mafen Fuentes
81. Mary Grace Avalon
82. Shamroth Tabanao
83. Maynard Espallardo
84. Rosario Espallardo
85. Teresa Cajudan
86. Grace Dela Torre
87. Cherrylene Rodrigues
88. Sivian T. Gladewala
89. Joy Bernardo
90. Kristine M. Johns Santos
91. Melissa Cabrera
92. Joy Umotoy
93. Jeanie D. Bales
94. Mimi Chan
95. Rosy Bernala
96. Gayle Amadilla
97. Joy Sarah Tabalo
98. Rozel Cleofe
99. Mel Dy
100. Arnold Rom-

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Text Inquirer <section keyword> name/city/message to 283 (Smart) or 2207 (Globe)

INQUIRER

7 Gifts of Superb!

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

25 LIFESTYLE

The ultimate money survey

By Hilci Mark M. Sabilas
24/7 Correspondent

NOT that we're greedy and shallow, but we all do know the huge role money plays in life. It does make some worlds go round.

Curious about young people's priorities, monthly expenses and expenses, 24/7 conducted the ultimate money survey to take a peek at our relationship with money.

A bunch of questions, 200 respondents who made between (age range: 14-29) and a hundred Girlhood, boys after, here are the results:

The source

A large chunk of the readers who participated (168 percent) are currently employed, likely paychecks the main source of money. Some (38 percent) receive allowances from parents or other guardians, while others (14 percent) get from both their job and their parents/guardians.

While almost 50 percent of the respondents say they do not receive allowance anymore, it's nice to know that almost half of the respondents are earning good money. Only 7 percent earn P5,000 and below on a monthly basis.

Expenses

P1,000-3,000 (36 percent) is the usual range of money spent on food. Some (26 percent) spend more for it, while fewer people (23 percent) spend less money on food. Only 5 percent say they don't eat out for grub.

The results of the question on money spent on clothes were a revelation, with almost half of the respondents (94 percent) claiming they only bring out P1,000 or less from their wallet when buying clothes every month.

Then again, the combined percentages of those who spend more than P1,000 on clothes is also almost 50 percent, which shows how much importance is given to garb.

When it comes to transportation, whether one commutes or has a car, the most interesting spent is between P1,000-3,000 every month (32 percent). Just behind or 31 percent is the P500-1,000 range. But a lot of the participants spend over P3,000 (19 percent).

A whopping 71 percent is composed of people who live with someone else who pays for the house rent. Only 29 percent can their own money.

Some 37 percent (96 respondents) do not give any financial contribution to the family—yet. 36 respondents (28 percent) say they allot P1,000-3,000 for the family every month, while a generous 12 percent whip out P5,000 or more for their friends.

About 35 percent of the participants do not buy CDs and cassette tapes, while 25 percent spend P50-250 and 22 percent spend P250-500 on these items.

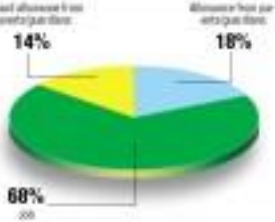
Although 52 respondents say they don't invest on books or other reading materials, it's nice to know that 35 percent of the respondents each out P100-500 every month, while 5 percent go to blow over a thousand pesos for READING every month.

The typical amount of money spent on trips to the movies(once, 10/20s and 30/50s every

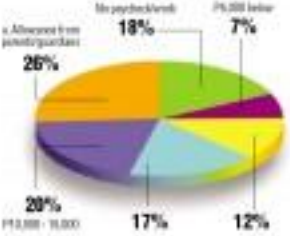
The ultimate money survey

A. SOURCE

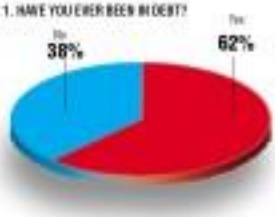
1. WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR MONEY?



3. HOW MUCH ARE YOU PAID EVERY MONTH?

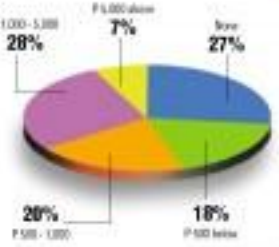


1. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN DEBT?



C. SAVINGS

1. HOW MUCH DO YOU GET TO SAVE TO YOUR BANK ACCOUNT



2. HOW MUCH ALLOWANCE DO YOU GET EVERY MONTH?

3. HOW MUCH ARE YOU PAID EVERY MONTH?

B. EXPENSES

EVERY MONTH HOW MUCH DO YOU SPEND ON:

1. FOOD

2. CLOTHES

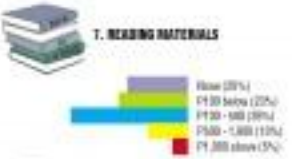
3. TRANSPORTATION (GAS/FARE)

4. HOUSE RENT

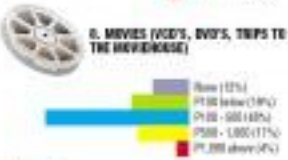
5. CONTRIBUTION TO THE FAMILY

6. MUSIC (CD'S, CASSETTE TAPES, LIVE PERFORMANCES)

7. READING MATERIALS



8. MOVIES (VCD'S, DVD'S, TRIPS TO THE MOVIEHOUSE)



9. INTERNET (PREPAID CARDS/ SUBSCRIPTION)

10. CELLPHONE LOAD

C. SAVINGS

1. HOW MUCH DO YOU GET TO SAVE TO YOUR BANK ACCOUNT EVERY MONTH?

D.

1. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN DEBT?

2. DO YOU OWN A CREDIT CARD?

3. DO YOU HAVE A BANK ACCOUNT?

Yes (82%)
No (18%)

Extra

Most of the participants have bank accounts (82 percent). About 51 percent have credit cards, while the rest don't.

302 people (82 percent) admit they've been in debt. What circulary circumstances they are out of (needed) answers include asking for and borrowing money from parents, spouses, siblings, loans and other relatives, making cash advances or salary loans, and transactions between ATM machines.

Some have vices and addictions to depend on, like selling panties and the e-load business. A lot of the respondents just stay at home whenever they're cash-strapped, while some proudly say they don't use out of cash. Senator Papalinda says she uses her Citibank credit card.

Savings

Some 28 percent reveal that they get to save P1,000-5,000 every month, while 27 percent say they don't get to save anything at all.

People say money's meant to be spent. True, but we should know when and when not to spend. It always pays to save for the rainy days. That's the moral lesson of this survey.

Cashing in on creativity

By Vanessa Arellano Chester
24/7 Correspondent

Turning your hobby into a business is no piece of cake. If you have doubts on your start-up plans, always seek assistance

EVER heard of that girl who enjoyed creating trinkets for herself, and then made it big by supplying all sorts of funky accessories to top designers and brands?

We've all heard stories like this about people who started doing things they loved and eventually got paid big money for it. And while we all think getting rich is very nice, we rarely write off the same courage to step up to the plate and swing away, many things hinder us: lack of money, fear of the unknown, and just how the heck to start difficult part—getting started.

It's not that difficult to turn your hobby into something income-generating. The trick is to think of it as a business.

Then, prepare a mini-business plan. The pointers would be: what, who, how, how much and when. The 'why' part is a given. You love what you do, believe that others share your interest, and that this meeting of between cosmic spell continue for you. Here comes the first question out.

The product

What is your product? Try to define your goods base at an early stage. If you love making soaps and feel it is a potential money-making venture, but also enjoy experimenting with your own recipes, which is also a potential venture that may consider (e.g. privacy laws), decide which one you like doing more and concentrate on that.

Trying to start too many endeavors at the same time could muddle up your goals and leave you with no business at all. Take it one good step at a time; one talent at a time.

The market

Who is your target market? Identify it, as it would be easier for you to find your niche and know which (kinds) of people you will introduce your product to. This should be a cinch, especially since you're breaking through the barrier anyway.

Next, if you're serious, do research. Devote twisted your will to books and other published information. Go out. Ask people what they want and where they expect your goods to be seen. Then, conduct a survey and interview shops that sell goods similar to yours, ask about their methods and goods, and take it from there.

Of course, some stores are a little stingy with disclosing certain information. When this happens, you can just hang out in their shops and observe the people who frequent their places and the items that fly off the shelves.

The process

Time to go about your business—now this is the tricky part. This is where your ingenuity and creativity come in. Because businesses are everywhere, you have to stand out. While getting featured in a website or a magazine would help, sales would be boosted if you have a unique name out.

I know a girl who managed to sell her design concept to one of the top salons in the country by following not what other creative juggle at a certain place every morning and scrutinizing the girl to jog with him he a couple of weeks, finding him supports of information about her idea in the process.

Eventually the owner was through her subtle persistence, got impressed with her determination and bought her concept. I do not suggest that you can cross the all-nighter stalker, but if you do, be discreet. Hey, sometimes you gotta do what you gotta do!

The capital

How much would you need to start a business? Depends. Your venture doesn't really have to have a grand launch. If your personal budget is rather tight and you feel strongly against borrowing from others, start small. Spread small. Sell to friends first, so you'll have a test market and you'll slowly get used to gradual increasing order volumes, to against embracing the entire universe in one blow.

Set up a website in one of those free hosting services on the Internet. Promote it to almost everyone you know, whenever you can and wherever appropriate. Keep this in mind: There is no room for shyness when you're trying to market your innovations; when done right, you will be rewarded for your confidence.

But, of course, if your money to have a pretty impressive start, you could loan money from your parents, relatives, friends and all those who are willing to render support. If you have a stable day job, you could try applying for a bank loan, but be forewarned that you should only do this if you're sure you can keep up with payments and the interest rates.

The timing

And when do you launch it? Again, depends. If you think you've the queen of bath-bomb making, then go for it. But not during the wet season, when people would rather have tea or coffee.

In short, timing is essential. That's why no matter how much you're good at something, you can't just dive into a business without considering demand factors. Obviously, you can't sell aspirin up. Big flops: where you know it's going to rain dinosaurs almost every day for a couple of months.

Or in less extreme terms, you can't market your dazzling picket of pink and neon green chairs at a funeral. The key is to study the current before throwing pains at it, because whether we admit it or not, today's consumerism-conscious do not have much interest in spending their precious cash on the what-not (with the exception of some, of course).

The support

Ultimately, turning your hobby into a business is no piece of cake. And if you have doubts on your start-up plans, seek assistance. The government, through the National SME Council and medium enterprises) Development Plan, has set up SME centers everywhere to help those who are planning to establish their own businesses.

Ask for tips and pointers from successful entrepreneurs. Be informed on the latest trends. While you may know your hobby like the palm of your hand, turning it into a viable business is another story. So keep an open mind, and learn, learn and learn some.

E-mail the author at vane_chester@yahoo.com

To money hell and back

By Chiqui Tarrosa
24/7 Correspondent

When the going gets tough, the tough go shopping. But what if you shop yourself to crushing debt?

THESE are real stories of real, regular people—not your melodramatic characters who have to give up their children because they can't afford to feed them anymore, or who have to prostitute themselves for tuition money, although this is part of the harsh reality to our country.

Instead, we're talking of regular people, the kind you meet when you're walking down the street, or the "Sesame Street" gang goes. Like the young couple coming across your table in the food court, or the cute yuppie guy who always gets his iced-Coldmoo caffeine fix the same time you do, or the well-dressed lady sitting at the other end of your MRT bench.

Because it can happen to the best of us, debt, I mean.

Debt, the most white-collar worker's worst nightmare, comes with the territory. Or, metaphorically speaking, it's the thing called a credit card. Obtaining a credit card is usually a must. It establishes one's credit reputation. It's handy as credit card company approvers count application. It means you're financially capable. In the US and most First World countries, entrepreneurs are suspicious of cash-paying people. They prefer credit card payments for purchases made.

And because some young people don't see the actual cash they flash from fingers, they get carried away using their credit cards.

Debt trap

One of the most popular debt stories in the 1990s was R&B girl group TLC's bankruptcy, after a raft of successful albums had propelled them to financial security and shopping heaven, the trio got carried away with their spending. But quite out of their teens, they were not managing all that money well, and ended up declaring bankruptcy some where. It took them several years to get back on their feet.

Just back to our reality. Now find the regular young people's debts get. My friend, Alma, an owner PhP1,000 in credit card debt before she was 25. And the sad, stupid part was, it happened because she lent her credit card to her boyfriend—and he did all the spending but left her to do the paying after they broke up.

Now painful was it to pay for something you didn't even experience, worse to eat? Today, Rina is in her early 30s, has racked off her P50,000 debt, and is credit card-less.

Annie and Carlo were newly-wed yuppies with promising careers. They took out a housing loan for the down payment on their condominium. A year later, they took out a car loan for their second car. Then, a year after that, they took out an education loan for the skyrocketing pre-school tuition of their first child.

They started depending on their credit cards for groceries, gas and other purchases because their salaries were allotted for loan payments. Then they took out a loan to pay for their credit card bills before they knew it, Annie and Carlo were seven hundred thousands of pesos in debt.

How did they climb out of this hole? Carlo had to work overtime for some years, finishing not on his children's lives, just to pay off their debts. Today, Annie and Carlo try to live simply and only use their credit card for emergencies.

It's been said that the wealthier one becomes, the more debt one has. Some didn't believe this. To heed a comfortable life, could one really run into billion (or half) bits out of money woes if they happened upon them—and they surely did.

Then Peter's father died. Before he could even get his bearings on it, Peter's mother's estate got processed to paying his father's debts. After inheritance tax, Peter was left with debts. Not even assets, but a requires he had to pay off himself.

Today, Peter is still paying, but at least he has learned the value of a hard-earned peso.

Drastic measures

"Many the more careful spenders can find themselves with too much debt on occasion," Citibank's consumer vice president for public relations and communications Ameli Lim, explains. "Often, financial crises result from circumstances beyond your control. Maybe you or someone in the family lost a job or became seriously ill. Of course, this could also be because of unrealistic spending habits."

Ultimately, taking drastic measures such as working abroad to earn money from one's family, as Annie and Carlo experienced, or hiding away in order far-off provinces and coming back with a new identity, how should a young person manage his or her debt?

"If you find yourself owing too much, call your creditors before they call you," Ameli advises. "You'll find that most creditors will help. They want to get paid, so they will work with people who are truly interested in getting out of debt."

Well, if more creditors are so helpful, maybe I should finally stop smashing off Bhutto supplement card and get my own credit card.

Blues take on a modern twist

Lorel Gatbonton

MODERN city dictor

MODERN romantic

MODERN rebel

HEADING home a huge fan of greens for quite some time now, it was inevitably a breath of fresh air to anticipate another trend hue in the color spectrum. And with this season, here comes the slowly boiling stoup with verdant shades, icy teal blues are inspiring us take over makeup counters and moms girls' focus (more than raindrops falling to the ground).

Yes, blue is the new hue for the "it" area to coax whisper light to electric. Hues take on a modern twist and turn hotter into magnetic. This season, accept is a must wear, so take advantage of the trend and turn it into your own signature look with your cover cloth glance or a shy pink blush.

Maybelline helps us out with three faces that spell "Modern Blues." Wear your own essence and watch the world can bliss with envy.

Modern city dictor

Fantasy through the urban jungle with ease, looking bold back yet absolutely glam. If celebrity is your thing, be a city dictor and turn heads over way.

Get the look:

Keep your brows groomed with Maybelline's Eyebrow Duo....shape those arch so up without looking harsh. Next, frost your entire lid with a very sheer blue like Maybelline Roller Color in Topaz Blue. Instantly the effect with a liquid liner in a steel blue shade (match me me Maybelline Liquid Stay Liner) beyond to keep coloration breathless in August. Don't leave your lashes untouched for major flutter power. Sky-High Curves Mascara is your best bet for nude-long lashes that still keep your line of admirers just as lengthy.

For high-impact eyes, go for nubile lips and cheeks. Try Pure Blush in Pure Apricot on your apples and Watershine 3D Gloss in Clear Champagne.

Modern rebel

If keeping a low profile isn't your thing, deep blues are for you. You won't be sorry. If this eye-catching look will blue them away.

Get the look:

Go for the contrast. Though light shades might be too angsty-sweet. For wow wave, remember that there will provide you the smoldering look. Start off with Maybelline Roller Color in Pink Sapphire Sequel topped with a bit of Topaz Blue. Apply Color Contrast Eyeshadow in Lovely Lilac just up to your creases for a base that's the perfect canvas for your masterpiece. Smoke it up with Great Lim Pyeliner in Onyx, but make sure to keep the look cautiously sultry by smudging the color instead of smearing a harsh straight line on your eyes.

Highlight those sculpted cheekbones instead of wearing bright blush! Wear a light pink like Pure Blush in Pearly Rose, then use a bit of shimmer like Roller Color to highlight on your cheekbones for gleaming cheeks. Lips! Clear gloss is all you need, baby. Try Watershine 3D Gloss in Clear Drops.

Modern romantic

Don't think that just because blue is supposed to be "for the boys," wearing it on your face will keep your femininity threatened. Achieve an old-school romantic look using blue by wearing it up with other shades to create the softest effect.

Get the look:

Keep it gorgeously light and illuminous; your purpose with a mix of Roller Color in Blue Topaz, Lovely Lilac and Silver Lilac. Sling on a touch of the latter on the outer corner your eyes look very made-up, as you want to avoid this to seem effortlessly pretty. Don't hold off on the mascara though, as beautiful lashes will keep you done-ready even without extra time in the bathroom.

Be the ultimate princess of romance with pink, pink, pink! Apply a double layer of Pure Blush in Pearly Rose. If you must add an extra dose of glamour, use Roller Color in Rainbow as a highlighter. For kiss-worthy lips, slick on Watershine 3D in Rose Champagne and top it off with Watershine Liquid Diamonds in Gold as shine for smooth, full lips.

Maybelline New York products are available in leading department stores and health and beauty stores nationwide.

E-mail feedback to pik_vanityfare@hotmail.com or lorel_gatbo@yahoo.com

Win tickets to Hoobastank's concert on Aug. 17

A BIG congratulations to Lorelei S. Morales (Barili) for vanishing Hoobastank for free at the Folk Arts Theater on Sunday, Aug. 17 for her cracked work that she submitted to us!

Please to see Hoobastank for free too? Let your creativity flow and get a chance to win sixteen tickets to the beauty "Live in Manila—The Reunion Tour!"

Just send us your most unique hoobastank memorabilia or artwork (album cover, tattoo design, graffiti art, etc). E-mail your entries to vanityfare@inquirer.com.ph or send to The Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Makati-Ave and Pasay Rotonda, Makati City, together with your name, age, address and contact no. We will choose one winner who will get a pair of tickets each worth plus a CD of Hoobastank's "The Reunion" album from MCA Music until Aug. 15. Chosen one will also be given tickets Dong, Dan, Markie and Chris of Hoobastank.

"Live in Manila—The Reunion Tour" is presented by Smart Buddy, MTV and Nu Carbon in cooperation with Citizen Eco-Drive Watches, official residence Manila Hotel, Pony Footwear, Fudge Magazine and radio partners Magic 89.9, 99.5 RT, 100.3 Kiss, 101.9 I, Jeep 92.3 and 882.867. To get your own tickets, call Ticketworld at 891-9999.

ONE of Lorel's designs